



**ASSESSMENT OF SKILLS AUDIT ON WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT
POSITIONS IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT FOCUSING ON COUNCILLORS AND OFFICIALS
IN SOUTH AFRICAN MUNICIPALITIES**

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ABBREVIATIONS

ANC	African National Congress
ANCWL	African National Congress Women's League
BPFA	Beijing Platform for Action
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CGE	Commission for Gender Equality
CoGTA	Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs
DDM	District Development Model
ERRP	Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan
FET	Further Education and Training
GAD	Gender and Development
GESF	Gender Equality Strategy Framework
GMS	Gender Management System
HR	Human Resources
HRD	Human Resource Development
HRM	Human Resource Management
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
ICMA	International Capital Market Association
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
IDP	Integrated Development Plan
LG	Local Government
LGSETA	Local Government Sector Education and Training Authority
LLF	Local Labour Forum
LMIP	Labour Market Intelligence Partnership
LODLOG	Local Democracy and Local Governance Programme
LOGOLA	Local Government Leadership Academy
MSR	Municipal Staff Regulations
NGOs	Non-governmental organisations
NQF	National Qualification Framework
NSG	National School of Government
OFO	Organising Framework for Occupations
PR	Proportional Representative
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SADC	Southern African Development Community

SALGA	South African Local Government Association
SETAs	Sector Education and Training Authorities
StatsSA	Statistic South Africa
WID	Women in Development
WNC	Women's National Coalition
WSP	Work Skills Plan

KEY DEFINITIONS

Basic Conditions of Employment Act, 75 of 1997: Ensures that women have the right to perform any type of work or to practise any profession they prefer. This act further aims to create a family-friendly work environment (South Africa, 1997).

Change Management: Change management skills are skills that you can use to help your company through the process of making organizational changes.¹

Client Services: Client services are the processes and interactions organizations and members of their staff have with their clients. Client services are an important part of maintaining client and customer relationships.²

Coaching & Mentoring: Coaching and mentoring are development approaches based on the use of one-to-one conversations to enhance an individual's skills, knowledge, or work performance.³

Communication & Interpersonal Skills: The ability to relate to and get along with others, build trust, empathize, and see things from different perspectives. Interpersonal skills refer to the broader set of skills of which communication is key but also include social and emotional skills.⁴

Community/Stakeholder Engagement: Community engagement aims to ensure everyone's voices are heard, allowing the public to help shape outcomes that align with their needs and aspirations. Stakeholder engagement activities allow you to target individuals or groups that have a high level of impact or influence on a project.⁵

¹ <https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/change-management-skills#:~:text=Change%20management%20skills%20are%20skills,the%20success%20of%20a%20company.>

² <https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/finding-a-job/what-are-client-services#:~:text=Client%20services%20are%20the%20processes,sales%2C%20software%20and%20health%20care.>

³ <https://www.cipd.org/en/knowledge/factsheets/coaching-mentoring-factsheet/#:~:text=Coaching%20and%20mentoring%20are%20development,terms%20are%20often%20used%20interchangeably.>

⁴ <https://libguides.wigan-leigh.ac.uk/c.php?g=667800&p=4736450#:~:text=The%20ability%20to%20relate%20to,include%20social%20and%20emotional%20skills.>

⁵ <https://www.consultationmanager.com/community-engagement-vs-stakeholder-engagement-whats-the->

Computer Literacy: The knowledge and ability to use computers and related technology efficiently, with skill levels ranging from elementary use to computer programming and advanced problem solving. Computer literacy can also refer to the comfort level someone has with using computer programs and applications.⁶

Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996: Chapter 2 promotes human rights and equality, Chapter 9 establishes bodies like the Commission for Gender Equality, and Chapter 10 emphasizes fair public administration practices for broad representation and career development.

Data Processes and Analysis: Data processing and analysis involves the transformation of raw data into meaningful insights using analytical tools and techniques.⁷

Emotional Intelligence: The ability to manage both your own emotions and understand the emotions of people around you.⁸

Employee Assistance: A work-based intervention program designed to assist employees in resolving personal problems.⁹

Employment Equity Act, 55 of 1998: It is aimed at promoting equal opportunity and fair treatment in employment through the elimination of unfair discrimination and implementation of affirmative action, and women are declared as one of the designated vulnerable groups (South Africa, 1998[a]).

difference/#:~:text=Community%20engagement%20aims%20to%20ensure,or%20influence%20on%20a%20project.

⁶ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Computer_literacy

⁷ <https://www.linkedin.com/learning/top-10-skills-for-ai-systems-designers/data-processing-and-analysis#:~:text=Data%20processing%20and%20analysis%20involves,%2C%20and%20automate%20decision%2Dmaking>.

⁸ [https://mhanational.org/what-emotional-intelligence-and-how-does-it-apply-workplace#:~:text=Emotional%20Intelligence%20\(EI\)%20is%20the,%2C%20empathy%2C%20and%20social%20skills](https://mhanational.org/what-emotional-intelligence-and-how-does-it-apply-workplace#:~:text=Emotional%20Intelligence%20(EI)%20is%20the,%2C%20empathy%2C%20and%20social%20skills).

⁹ https://sso.shrm.org/IDBUS/SHRM/PORTAL-EE/JOSSO/SSO/REDIR?josso_cmd=login&josso_partnerapp_id=portal-sp

Ethics: To be ethical at the workplace means that you respect, care and love hard work and consider it a valuable quality. Strong work ethic means you're also dependable, productive, collaborative, and passionate.¹⁰

Financial Management: All managers are responsible for developing budgets, allocating resources, and monitoring the financial performance of their respective teams or departments.¹¹

First-Aid in the Workplace: First aid refers to the urgent, temporary care given to a person immediately after an injury occurs.¹²

Gender Analysis: It involves the collection and analysis of sex-disaggregated data which can shed light on the differential impact of development activities on women and men, as well as the impact that gender roles and responsibilities have on development efforts. There are also qualitative analyses that are carried out to aid in clarifying how and why these differential roles, responsibilities, and impacts have come to be.

Gender and Development (GAD): Gender and Development (GAD) aims to integrate gender awareness into all development efforts, emphasizing interventions to address unequal gender relations hindering women's full participation. GAD promotes gender equity by enabling equal participation, decision-making, and fair rewards through affirmative action to bridge gender disparities.

Gender Equity: This refers to ensuring that women and men have equitable access to productive resources and social services so that they can both lead productive lives.

Gender Mainstreaming: Gender mainstreaming aims to achieve gender equality by integrating gender considerations into policies and practices, conducting analyses on the effects on women and men. It involves routinely considering gender issues in strategic planning to promote equality and gender equity in both individual and organizational actions.

¹⁰ <https://enhancv.com/resume-skills/strong-work-ethic/>

¹¹ Data on the interviewed participants can be found in Appendix A-E.

<https://emeritus.org/blog/finance-key-skills-finance-for-managers/#:~:text=All%20managers%20are%20responsible%20for,flow%20management%2C%20and%20cost%20analysis.>

¹² <https://safetyculture.com/topics/first-aid-in-the-workplace/#:~:text=What%20is%20First%20Aid%20in,a%20healthcare%20provider%20to%20arrive.>

Gender Management System (GMS): In the context of an existing Organisational framework, it is referred to as a network of structures, mechanisms, and processes that are in place to guide, plan, monitor, and evaluate the mainstreaming of gender into all areas of the Organization's work. A GMS promotes political will, partners with stakeholders, builds capacity, and shares good practices to advance gender equality.

Gender-Responsive Programmes: The goal of Gender-Responsive Programmes and Objectives is to set program and project objectives that take into account the differences between males and females, respectively, and seek to balance gender imbalances in ways that are non-discriminatory.

Health & Wellness: The optimal state of health of individuals and groups, and wellness is expressed as a positive approach to living¹³

Intimidation: These may include unlawful threats, harassment or instigation to violence; unsolicited, derogatory, or sexually explicit emails or texts; unapproved posting of private photos or videos; or improper approaches on social media platforms. Since the age of 15, one in ten women in the EU have been the victim of cyberbullying.

Labour Relations Act, 66 of 1995: The Act in South Africa protects women from discrimination based on sex, including safeguarding their employment rights during maternity. It also mandates a code of good practice to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace and promote respectful and equitable work environments.

Leadership & Management: Leadership is the ability of an individual to influence, motivate, and enable others to contribute to the organization's success. Management is responsible for controlling an organization, a group, or a set of entities to achieve a particular objective.¹⁴

Legal Skills: Communicate well with clients regarding case proceedings, a plan of action, and be able to win their trust. Communication is also vital in deriving all information

¹³ https://www.medicinenet.com/what_is_health_and_wellness/article.htm

¹⁴ <https://www.simplilearn.com/leadership-vs-management-difference-article#:~:text=Leadership%20is%20the%20ability%20of,to%20achieve%20a%20particular%20objective.>

correctly from the clients to form your fool-proof case. Written communication skills are vital for drafting legal documents.¹⁵

Local Government Law: Local government law refers to the principles that determine how these governments are structured and how they interact with one another—particularly when they disagree.¹⁶

Public Administration: Responsible for a range of vital services for people and businesses in defined areas. Among them are well known functions such as social care, schools, housing and planning and waste collection, but also lesser-known ones such as licensing, business support, registrar services and pest control.¹⁷

Local Government: Municipal Structures Act, 117 of 1998: Provides for specific guidelines which determines that every political party should ensure that at least 50% of their party candidate lists for municipal elections comprise women. Furthermore women and men should be evenly distributed through the list.

Mainstreaming: This is a process where marginalized groups are integrated into every aspect of the organization's life, thinking and business in order to make it more inclusive.

Monitoring & Evaluation: The skills necessary to effectively plan, implement, and assess the progress of a project or program. These skills include the ability to develop project plans, collect and analyse data, create, and manage budgets, document progress, and evaluate outcomes.¹⁸

Occupational Health & Safety: Occupational safety and health (OSH) is generally defined as the science of the anticipation, recognition, evaluation and control of hazards arising in or from the workplace that could impair the health and well-being of workers,

¹⁵ <https://www.skillsyouneed.com/rhubarb/necessary-skills-lawyer.html>

¹⁶ <https://hls.harvard.edu/courses/local-government-law/#:~:text=Local%20government%20law%20refers%20to,another%E2%80%94particularly%20when%20they%20disagree.>

¹⁷ <https://www.local.gov.uk/about/what-local-government#:~:text=Local%20government%20is%20responsible%20for,registrar%20services%20and%20pest%20control.>

¹⁸ [https://www.evalcommunity.com/career-advice/monitoring-and-evaluation-skills/#:~:text=Monitoring%20and%20Evaluation%20\(M%26E\)%20skills,document%20progress%2C%20and%20evaluate%20outcomes.](https://www.evalcommunity.com/career-advice/monitoring-and-evaluation-skills/#:~:text=Monitoring%20and%20Evaluation%20(M%26E)%20skills,document%20progress%2C%20and%20evaluate%20outcomes.)

taking into account the possible impact on the surrounding communities and the general environment.¹⁹

Planning: Planning skills are abilities that directly contribute to your productivity, accuracy, and effectiveness in the workplace. For example, you might use planning abilities to decide when to do each task in a project based on your workload and deadlines.²⁰

Presentation Skills: Presentation skills are a set of skills that professionals require for delivering effective and engaging presentations to a wide variety of audiences.²¹

Project Management: The application of processes, methods, skills, knowledge and experience to achieve specific project objectives according to the project acceptance criteria within agreed parameters.²²

Protocol Management: The process of defining, implementing, and maintaining standard procedures and guidelines within an organizational setting.²³

Public Service Act, 103 of 1994: Makes provision for the employment of public servants in national and provincial spheres of government being ever mindful of the need to promote representativity and equality in all employment practices (South Africa, 1994).

Public Speaking: Public speaking, also called oration or oratory, is the process of communicating information to a live audience. The type of information communicated is deliberately structured to inform, persuade, and entertain.²⁴

Quality Management: Quality management is the act of overseeing all activities and tasks that must be accomplished to maintain a desired level of excellence. This includes the

¹⁹ https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_093550.pdf

²⁰ <https://uk.indeed.com/career-advice/cvs-cover-letters/planning-skills#:~:text=What%20are%20planning%20skills%3F,on%20your%20workload%20and%20deadlines>

²¹ <https://in.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/presentation-skills#:~:text=Presentation%20skills%20are%20a%20set,a%20wide%20variety%20of%20audiences>.

²² <https://www.apm.org.uk/resources/what-is-project-management/#:~:text=Definition,acceptance%20criteria%20within%20agreed%20parameters>.

²³ <https://devimpactinstitute.com/courses/office-administration/training-on-protocol-management/#:~:text=Protocol%20management%20refers%20to%20the,guidelines%20within%20an%20organizational%20setting>.

²⁴ <https://corporatefinanceinstitute.com/resources/management/public-speaking/#:~:text=Public%20speaking%2C%20also%20called%20oration,will%20to%20master%20the%20skill>.

determination of a quality policy, creating and implementing quality planning and assurance, and quality control and quality improvement.²⁵

Report Writing: A specific form of writing, written concisely and clearly and typically organised around identifying and examining issues, events, or findings from a research investigation.²⁶

Risk Mitigation: Risk mitigation is the process a business undertakes to reduce its exposure to the various risks it might face.²⁷

Service Oriented Delivery – Municipal Service Areas: Improve the quality of life of the community with due regard for ecological, social and financial limitations.²⁸

Sexuality and Gender Based Bullying: Sexual harassment and discrimination based on sexual orientation can be compared to sexuality and gender-based bullying. The bully may use sexually suggestive remarks or jokes, taunts or insults, images, messages, or emails, as well as prying questions concerning a student's personal life.

Sexual Harassment: Sexual harassment encompasses various forms of unwanted sexual advances, solicitation of sexual favours, sexually explicit verbal or physical conduct or gestures, as well as other sexually explicit behaviours that disrupt work and have the potential to offend or humiliate another individual.

Skills Development Act, 97 of 1998: The aim is to enhance South African workforce skills and elevate workers' quality of life while focusing on productivity, competitiveness, and self-employment. It includes provisions for creating active learning workplaces, leadership programs, and enhancing employability, especially for previously disadvantaged individuals like women.

²⁵ <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/q/quality-management.asp#:~:text=Quality%20management%20is%20the%20act,quality%20control%20and%20quality%20improvement.>

²⁶ <https://www.anu.edu.au/students/academic-skills/writing-assessment/report-writing#:~:text=A%20report%20is%20a%20specific,coming%20up%20with%20a%20solution.>

²⁷ <https://reciprocity.com/resources/what-is-risk-mitigation/#:~:text=Risk%20mitigation%20is%20the%20process,to%20avoid%20such%20unwanted%20events.>

²⁸

<https://journals.co.za/doi/abs/10.10520/EJC138808#:~:text=Sustainability%20within%20this%20context%20means,ecological%20and%20social%20and%20financial%20limitations.>

Strategic Gender: In the context of strategic gender needs, these are the needs that need to be met to overcome the subordination of women to men in society, e.g. improving educational opportunities for women. There are a number of needs related to women's empowerment and they vary according to the economic, social, political, and cultural circumstances of each country.

Supervisory: Supervisory skills are those skills that are important for managing and supervising others and are necessary for effective leadership. Supervisory means directing and guiding others in an efficient and productive way. Supervisors are responsible for this job.²⁹

The Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act, 4 of 2000: The Act promotes equality and prevents discrimination across various sectors, including employment. Section 8 prohibits gender-based discrimination, encompassing issues like gender-based violence, property inheritance, cultural practices, access to resources, and systemic inequalities in employment (South Africa, 2000).

Violence Against Women: In the context of this Declaration, "violence against women" refers to any form of gender-based violence that inflicts physical, sexual, or psychological harm or suffering upon women, or has the potential to do so, irrespective of its setting (public or private). This includes threats of such acts, coercion, or arbitrary deprivation of liberty.

White Paper on Local Government, 1998: The White Paper pledges government support for citizens' needs through a participatory and development-focused approach. It aims to reduce poverty and improve access to basic services, particularly benefiting rural women by offering alternative employment opportunities.

Women in Development (WID): The goal of women in development is to integrate women into existing development processes through tailored activities. Practical gender needs, like childcare facilities at workplaces, address women's roles as caregivers and providers.

Women Empowerment and Gender Equality Bill, 2013: The Bill aims to promote gender equality by aligning policies with international conventions, ensuring women's equal representation, and emphasizing their participation in decision-making. It addresses

²⁹ <https://trainingexpress.org.uk/supervisory-skills-of-a-good-supervisor/#:~:text=Supervision%20skills%20are%20those%20skills,an%20efficient%20and%20productive%20way.>

patriarchal attitudes, advocates for the removal of hindrances to gender equality, and focuses on economic empowerment and socio-economic rights of women, particularly in rural areas.

Women's Empowerment: Empowerment, as defined by Mandal (2013), involves a shift in power over time, closely linked to democracy and women's influence in various aspects. Agarwal (2003) and the World Bank (2002) emphasize empowerment as enabling marginalized individuals to make decisions and progress based on their choices.

Writing Skills: The skills you use to write effectively and succinctly.³⁰

³⁰ <https://www.theforage.com/blog/skills/what-are-writing-skills#:~:text=Writing%20skills%20are%20the%20skills,the%20physical%20act%20of%20writing.>

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

For local government to succeed, ethical and accountable political and administrative leadership are required as expounded in the White Paper on Local Government (1998). Research conducted by the University of the Free State in March 2024 to assess the skills of appointed and elected leadership in South Africa begin to paint a picture of the skills level as well as other barriers faced by women in local government.

This is the first known comprehensive research conducted to assess the skills of and other constraints on appointed and elected women in the local government sector in South Africa. The research sample included managers, non-managers (aspiring future managers) and councillors. A quantitative assessment was undertaken to address questions regarding the progress made by women and the competencies acquired through gender mainstreaming policy. The present research investigation was done from the perspective of empowerment theory, which was utilised to evaluate the skills and competencies of women in local government and to identify other barriers that impede the subsequent empowerment of women in local government.

The main assumption underlying the research was that women can and should contribute to sound governance. As a result, the objective of the study was to identify the main obstacles that exist as a result of the prevailing power dynamic in society between men and women. The data that was compiled and assessed throughout this study has confirmed that the representation of women is a fundamental aspect of municipal governance in South Africa. The results presented demonstrate that South Africa has made progress towards fulfilling its responsibilities to enhance the status and quality of life for women, as stipulated in the Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA) 1995, but that more can and should be done in future.

Since then, the number of women in municipal government has experienced periods of growth and periods of decline; during the Zuma administration, the number of women in municipal government declined significantly. As a result, the representation of women councillors at the municipal decision-making level continues to be disproportionately low when compared to that of men. This means that political decision-making at the municipal sphere is still predominantly controlled by males, despite the governing party's goal to achieve gender parity.

The continuing under-appreciation of women's issues creates a disconnect between their requirements and the fact that, despite comprising the majority of the population, women face the greatest number of obstacles pertaining to skills, ability and competencies development for optimal performance in the local government workplace. Apartheid-reinforced institutional processes and systems continue to persist a result of ineffective transformation policies: Patriarchal and traditionalist structures continue to dominate community and organisational life; transformative policies are supposedly applied in an unbiased manner, while politicians profit from the consolidation of authority at the highest levels (Bannister, 2003). Patriarchal systems also impede the expression of female viewpoints regarding matters pertaining to women. This indicate that without the necessary political will, resources and dedicated efforts to achieve change in practice, attempts to promote women to more leadership positions in municipal government structures, the mainstreaming of gender issues, and the provision of training for women leaders will continue to be sub-optimal end even ineffective.

The research results indicate that women in local government have proficient basic skills. This is true for both elected and appointed officials. For the elected officials the research results indicate that most of the councillors were recruited into the party due to being active in their community. The councillors consider themselves as activists. The training they received to prepare them for their new role was informal and formal training only took place when they became councillors. It was reported that female councillors need to have better emotional intelligence (thick skinned, assertive, confident, public speaking and listening skills). There is broad recognition that elected representatives need digital skills to be in a position to navigate the internet– this includes basic computer skills but also negotiating online protocols and conducting themselves accordingly.

The main skills auditing gaps in the current system include that women councillors do submit skills information but very little is done with the collated data. This can be improved by including women councillors more directly in the work skills processes of the municipality. The performance effectiveness of women councillors can be advanced through ensuring that women councillors support one another to form a united front. Women reported that they have learnt the most through informal learning from other colleagues, much more than through formal courses. The idea of local community-based women caucuses was mooted as women face unique challenges in the workplace having to balance their responsibilities as spouses, mothers, grandmothers, fathers, providers and community activists. This is a fraction of the roles that men play. Men sometimes

knowingly or unknowingly undermine and disrespect their women colleagues. It is common for women to be side-lined. As some respondents phrased it, men are only interested in power and using women to get to positions. Another senior local government practitioner said she had experienced more sexism in the workplace than racism. Men are simply callous and oblivious to behaviour offensive to women.

There is consensus that there should be no difference in the conduct of men and women, however, more can and should be done to ensure that the challenges faced by women are better addressed in the workplace. One case in point is the consequence faced by a member of parliament, Naledi Chriwa who was disciplined for attending to her sick child and in the process missing a crucial vote in parliament. The party bosses stance was that loyalty to party comes before family. One can only imagine the untenable position that the female member of parliament faced. The research also found that there are generally no local government workplace childcare facilities available, which can and will go a long way to support women and send a clear message that women matter and that their lived experiences matter. However, the conduct of men is the biggest barrier facing elected and appointed women in local government. This is worst in instances where women in leadership find themselves in the minority, where they are frequently overlooked, victimised and belittled.

The focus group discussions confirmed that women experience bullying in the workplace. This can be online and physical. One female councillor had her car torched and face continuous threats from community members who often resort to emotional blackmail and abuse which is illustrative of the current pressure current and future councillors face. Female councillors are particularly vulnerable. There is no doubt that the stakes are high and that the costs of being an elected women office-bearer is particularly high. This pattern is likely to increase as South Africa gears towards local government elections 2026. The temptation is to consider training and development as the only way to address the challenges faced by women in local government. It could not be determined whether the LG Seta have acted on the previous studies by the University of Pretoria (2019).

At the national and provincial spheres, SALGA have addressed the issue of women empowerment in local government through various forums that have increased and capacitated elected and appointed women considerably, however women often return to negative male-dominated working environments.

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1. INTRODUCTION

Women are now the largest group of university degree recipients, globally, With equal access to the same educational opportunities and qualifications as men, women are no longer necessarily disadvantaged with regard to their qualifications (United Nations, 2015). Women have made considerable progress in attaining leadership roles and currently hold 24% of senior executive and management positions across the world (Catalyst, 2017 as cited in Schock et al (2017) as well as 23% of parliamentary seats worldwide (International Parliamentary Union, 2015).

According to Ernst & Young (2021), South Africa has 65% of women appointed in the public sector. Out of the 65%, 34.87% occupies Senior Management Service (SMS) positions (Kahn & Louw, 2011). A skills audit conducted by South African Local Government Association (SALGA) revealed that women representation in the local government sector stands at 29.06% (SALGA, 2017). Women can and should play an even more prominent role in leadership positions in society, especially in local government. As mandated by the Skills Development Act (No. 97 of 1998), the LGSETA) has the role and responsibility to facilitate and promote skills development of the workforce within and across the local government sector. This mandate includes the development and implementation of the sector skills plan as well as approving workplace skills plans. The Local Government Sector Education and Training Authority (LGSETA) therefore decided to conduct a skills audit on women in leadership and management positions in local government focusing on councillors and officials in South African municipalities.

This study sought to find out if women in local government possess the necessary skills to enable them to perform well at the local government level. The focus of the research is therefore on skills and the lack of skills for women. However, this is only looking at one side of the equation – that of women. The same question needs to be asked about men. Do men possess the skills to govern well? The women's empowerment issue can further not only be related to skills acquisition, but also has to be understood as an issue of the relations of power between women and men. How men treat women in the workplace and to what extent there is a woman friendly institutional culture versus a hostile environment can be determined by how men and women treat each other in the workplace. Women empowerment research should therefore also take into consideration the context of local governments as workplaces.

Workplaces that are male dominated such as government sectors often are not friendly towards women. This is because the social networks that men form with each other, called homosocial capital, exclude women. It is a challenge for women to form homosocial networks because men are in positions of power; as such, it would be better for women to become members of male networks than to form their own networks (Bjarnegard, 2013).

Male dominance is often displayed through bullying, harassment to keep women in their place, or sexual harassment in the workplace. To understand the context of the workplace questions were included in this study about bullying, harassment and sexual harassment. Women's empowerment is therefore not only related to skills and capacity, but also to women's relationships with men in the workplace and specifically with men in decision-making positions. There is a relationship between empowerment and capacity building as Gaynor (2022), argues:

- Empowerment is fundamentally political. It is about challenging and transforming asymmetrical political relations between different groups. In this case women and men.
- It is done by groups for themselves, not by others.
- It is not only power to, but also power within – to challenge gender inequalities from within.
- Empowerment does not happen in a vacuum, but it comes up against structural, material and discursive constraints.
- Structures of power can be global, national or local.

Gaynor (2022) argues that empowerment has to mean more than passive training sessions. Capacity building also has to engage the structural, material and discursive constraints that disempower women. What is needed is that different forms of power that circulate and dominate need to be addressed to transform politicians' perceptions, attitudes and preferences in different sites (Gaynor, 2022: 59).

2. PROBLEM STATEMENT AND RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The LGSETA has the role and responsibility to facilitate and promote skills development of the workforce within and across the local government sector, as mandated by the Skills Development Act (No. 97 of 1998). This mandate includes the development and implementation of the sector skills plan as well as approving workplace skills plans. As such, the University of the Free State was requested to produce a research report on an

assessment of skills audit on women in leadership and management positions in local government, focusing on women councillors and officials in municipalities. Thus, the primary objective of the research was to provide a research report on the findings of an assessment of skills audit on women in leadership and management positions in local government focusing on councillors and officials in municipalities.

Good governance requires that government officials understand the work of governance and are suitably qualified to do that work. A skills audit determines the gap between the skills and knowledge needed to meet strategic goals within municipalities and the current skills and knowledge of women in local government. It helps to understand, identify, develop and communicate the right competencies required for the sector to succeed. The LGSETA currently does not have data that can determine if women in leadership and management positions within the local government sector possesses the necessary skills for their role and therefore a training plan to address skills gaps within women in the local government sector cannot be developed.

However, Bacchi, 1999 argues that problems that need investigation are often presented incorrectly, so that the focus is put on what is popularly perceived to be the problem, in order for certain presuppositions are implied or taken for granted. What also needs to be considered is what is left “unproblematic”, and to think how responses would differ if the problem were presented differently. She also argued that discourses around problems need to be investigated to show that language has material consequences. The presentation of the problem will in the last instance determine the intervention to solve it (Bacchi, 1999: 2-3).

In this audit the problem is defined as a lack of data about the specific competencies for elected and appointed women officials in local government. The implicit assumption is that a lack of such competencies might explain the current sub-optimal role of women in local government. While such a lack of competencies may explain this issue partially, the prevailing societal power relations between men and women might provide additional explanations for the current situation. While the appropriate competencies and capacity of women are necessary to make a good public servant, the institutional culture can be as disempowering as a lack of competencies, when it is male dominated, hostile and women unfriendly. The research therefore also investigated this issue as a secondary objective, to try to determine whether improvement in the institutional cultures of local governments might also improve the performance of women office-bearers and officials in local government.

The objectives of the research are addressed in this report as follows:

1. Determine skills and competencies of women who are currently in leadership positions within municipalities;
2. Conduct an analysis of current skills profile of women in leadership positions and determine the skills and competence gaps between the skills requirements and current skills sets;
3. Identify and define skills, competencies and qualifications required to effectively deliver on the operational requirements of the occupied positions
4. Determine skills that are essential for the positions occupied by women in order to thrive in a fourth industrial revolution world of work;
5. Determine critical and scarce skills for the women in local government sector
6. Make concise recommendations on skills audit process within municipalities based on international and regional best practices
7. Develop and recommend a training plan to address the identified skills gap

SECTION 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

1. INTRODUCTION

This section introduces a conceptual framework for gender mainstreaming to contextualise women's representation in management and leadership and to identify the necessary skills and competencies required for municipal governance.

This section introduces gender mainstreaming's conceptual framework and contextualises women's representation in management and leadership and the necessary skills and competencies required for municipal governance.

Gender is conceptually defined in diverse ways by a multitude of academicians, academics, and organisations. The term “gender” refers to social and cultural constructs of masculinities and femininities, or male and female roles in society. Launius and Hassel (2018), Richardson (2015), and Pratto et al. (2016) define gender as conventional and socially constructed power relations, including political, economic, and moral accountabilities, freedoms, and duties and obligations. Given this, women and men deserve equal respect and opportunities at personal and professional levels, resulting in gender equality in all parts of life, despite subjective and biased assertions. Gender equality therefore ensures equal participation of women and men in local administration, encouraging gender balance. Gender equity allocates resources to women proportionally according to their interests, capacities, and experiences.

Various researchers (Tripp, 2008; Dejene 2017; Du Toit, 1995; Geisler, 2006; Guy, 1990) advocate for gender mainstreaming in government procedures. Several authors (Gouws, 2006, Hassim and Meintjes, 2005; Fallon, 2008; Larry, 1999; Ngoma-Leslie, 2006; Samson, 2008; Hassim, 2006; Tanga 2008; van Driel 1994) have examined political governance, and democracy. The theories on feminist-activist movements in Africa and Southern Africa emphasise the importance of gender-based political and policy participation.

Following this research, the African Union (AU) adopted the Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa in 2003. Later, in 2004, the Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa was adopted at the Third Ordinary Session of the United Nations General Assembly in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. These declarations spurred South Africa to join regional and international institutions that promote gender equality, raise awareness of gender issues, and include

gender concerns into government policies and initiatives (Holli, Magnusson, and Ronnblom 2005:148) (Nhlapo and Vyas-Doorgapersad, 2015). Continuous evaluation and assessment are required to address areas for improvement.

2. APPROACHES TO WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

The belief that women are treated unfairly because they are women living in a culture that upholds or prioritises male dominance is a common belief expressed in all types of feminism. This viewpoint links cultural representations and socially acceptable stereotypes to the status of women. According to Simone de Beauvoir (1998) and Fullbrook (1998), feminism seeks to address gender inequality that results from cultural influences.

Within the framework of liberal democracy, liberal feminism seeks to promote gender equality through diplomatic and policy reform. With a primary focus on the public domain of society, it aims to incorporate women into systems and institutions (Mynard, 1995) and to remove obstacles that may cause discrimination. This kind of feminism sees the state as an essential institution that is responsible for safeguarding human rights by law, and it asserts that restricted access to civil liberties is the primary barrier to equality. Therefore, in order to achieve gender equality and greater inclusivity, liberal feminism promotes the state's protection of civil freedoms and promotes equal opportunities. For example, the Broad Based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE) policy and Affirmative Action (AA) regulations in South Africa, as forms of positive action, require organisations to give women priority and equal opportunities. In liberal democratic cultures, liberal feminism is inclusive, socially progressive, and generally supportive of the institutions of power that are now in place. It actively promotes men's participation in feminism and is linked to centrism and reformism (Beasley, 2005).

Liberal feminism, according to West (n.d.), places a strong emphasis on broad public reform as a means of promoting greater inclusivity and advancing gender equality. This can be accomplished, mainly by law reform and the abolition of job segregation between the sexes, through equal access to education, equal compensation, equal employment prospects, and equitable career advancement between the sexes. According to Campbell and Wasco (2000), it is still difficult to achieve equality for women in the workforce, especially in fields that were traditionally dominated by men. Fair compensation and equal access to leadership positions are two ways to solve this.

Gender equality and women's liberation and empowerment are major influences on the progressive laws and human rights that the South African government has committed to promoting since 1994. In order to empower women, society must change and confront the legacy of apartheid, particularly with regard to the distribution of power among women, men, institutions, and laws. It also entails addressing structural injustice, misogyny, patriarchy, and gender inequality. The triple challenge of poverty, inequality, and unemployment is the result of historical barriers faced by women in various socio-economic domains, including the labour market, healthcare, political system, and justice system. As a result, development programmes, including women empowerment in South Africa, have not produced the desired outcomes (StatsSA, 2017 – 2022).

Although the phrase "women's empowerment" has many different meanings, it can be defined as the ability of women to control the resources and decisions that affect their quality of life. The decrease of poverty, the achievement and advancement of women's rights, gender equity, prosperity, and inclusive growth may all be accomplished with the help of women's empowerment. Increasing the number of women enrolled in school and putting the equal pay for equal work concept into practice in the workplace are two examples of enabling factors for empowerment. The National Strategy Plan of Gender-Based Violence and Femicide, contends that improving women's economic circumstances reduces their vulnerability to abuse and violence, also places a strong emphasis on women's empowerment (StatsSA, 2017 – 2022). Goal 5 of the SDGs offers a chance to reevaluate the vital role that women play in changing society.

The government of South Africa has committed to the Economic Reconstruction and Recovery Plan (ERRP), which involves the economic empowerment of women, youth, and people with disabilities, in order to overcome the triple problem of poverty, inequality, and unemployment in the country. The District Development Model (DDM) is a local government initiative that aims to empower marginalised communities by promoting integrated government coordination in addressing economic, environmental, and social challenges over an extended period of time that extends beyond municipal, provincial, and national election cycles (StatsSA, 2017 – 2022).

In a local government context, women's empowerment is a multifaceted and dynamic process, included among others are:

- The development of favourable conditions, such as socio-economic, demographic, legislative, and physical reality;

- Institutional capacity, encompassing managerial techniques, organisational culture, and human resources policies; and
- Individual ability, encompassing education, background, skills, and work ethics.

A broad spectrum of stakeholders, such as the LGSETA, SALGA, CoGTA, the Department of Higher Education, organised labour, professional associations, universities, foreign organisations, cooperate and coordinate policies, strategies, practices, and programmes. Women's empowerment also depends on several national programmes coming together successfully, such as:

- SALGA Women's Commission which is responsible to coordinate, promote and advocate for gender appropriate strategies and practices within member municipalities and feed into regional and continental processes
- The Local Government Professionalisation Framework
- The Human Capital Management Profiling and Reporting Toolkit
- The Human Resource Management and Development Strategy (Blueprint for local government)
- Councillor Induction Programmes
- The Senior Managers Induction Programme
- The Local Democracy and Local Governance Programme (LODLOG)
- The National and Advanced Certificate in Municipal Governance
- The Local Labour Forum (LLF)
- Leadership Development Workshops

According to the Local Government Municipal Structures Act of 1998, "every party shall ensure that women make up 50% of the candidates on the party lists, and that the distribution of women and men candidates through the list is equal". (LGSETA, 2019)

3. GENDER MAINSTREAMING

Gender perspectives must be taken into account as an essential component of all actions in all municipal functional domains and programmes in order to empower women. Programmes for women's empowerment typically succeed in workplace environments that value open communication, cooperation, innovative thinking, and support from management. Initiatives that are tailored to a particular gender can support women's empowerment and serve as a vital source of innovative concepts and tactics. In addition, women's empowerment ought to promote self-discipline, self-worth, awareness-raising,

self-assurance, option expansion, and easier access to opportunities for learning and advancement. Then and only then would it be possible to truly address gender inequity and prejudice in society (Van der Walddt, et al, 2019).

Exploring gender mainstreaming and its significance in the context of local government in South Africa requires grasping its role in policy formation and the operational challenges it presents. Gender mainstreaming is a comprehensive approach that institutions use to embed gender equality in their functions and enhance gender-awareness - a topic of ongoing debate. The primary aim of gender mainstreaming is to foster gender inclusivity. By integrating gender perspectives into strategies and policies, organizations strive to improve gender competence and accountability. The United Nations (1997) details gender mainstreaming as an evaluative process of policies, legislation, and programs to understand their gendered effects, ensuring fair outcomes for all genders and preventing further inequalities, ultimately achieving gender equality.

Historically, specialized divisions focused on women were established by state institutions in the 1970s, a nascent step toward gender mainstreaming. However, progress was slow, leading to a more integrated strategy across organizational procedures to pursue gender equality (Reeves & Baden, 2000). This policy area scrutinizes existing inequalities between men and women, identifying gaps for enhanced policy-making. It employs initiatives for tracking progress in addressing these disparities (United Nations, 2012).

Since gender inequality persists, gender mainstreaming practices have been introduced to spot and bridge gender-based barriers in accessing resources. Commentators note that mainstreaming discerns difference in gender opportunities and experiences, aiming to remove disparities and foster fairness (Warren, 2007; March et al., 1999). Gender mainstreaming further draws from gender studies, which delves into gender dynamics within societal structures, influencing policy development with a lens that accommodates both men and women's perspectives. Gender studies reveal how cultural norms and social standings shape our understanding of gender roles (Pilcher & Whelehan, 2016; Cranny-Francis et al., 2017; Oyěwùmí, 2016; Halpem & Perry-Jenkins, 2016).

Within local government, examining the skills of women in leadership and management positions is vital as it involves assessing how well they are prepared to handle gender mainstreaming endeavours. If gaps exist, they must be addressed to ensure women leaders can drive and sustain gender-inclusive changes effectively. This analysis consequently aids in crafting targeted development programs and policies that enhance

the capabilities of women in local governmental leadership, ensuring that they can influence and perpetuate gender equality successfully.

Best practices in gender mainstreaming for women in leadership positions within municipal government underscore the need for a complex skill set that facilitates gender equality. Despite international efforts, exemplified by the Beijing Platform for Action, realizing effective gender mainstreaming is beset with challenges relating to policy execution (Moser & Moser, 2005). While cultural norms and institutional limitations present considerable hurdles, some nations have made significant advancements in gender policy integration, such as Burundi, Botswana, and Rwanda, the latter achieving notable gender parity in parliament (Omotosho, 2015). Despite progress, there is a need for mechanisms that truly institutionalize women's rights and facilitate accountable access to resources (Rao & Kelleher, 2005).

The Millennium Development Goals, and later the Sustainable Development Goals—especially Goal 5—have aimed at fostering gender equality, with the SDGs calling for comprehensive and well-implemented gender mainstreaming strategies to combat discrimination (UNDP, 2015). For women to be successful in municipal leadership roles, it is essential that they possess skills in strategic negotiation, political literacy, and a deep grasp of gender mainstreaming concepts. Equipped with these skills, women can navigate through institutional hurdles and foster effective representation, thus reinforcing the advancement of gender equality in local governance.

SECTION 3: GLOBAL AND REGIONAL CONTEXT

1. THE CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN (CEDAW)

Several regional and international agreements that have resulted in gender-specific duties have been signed by South Africa. Among other things, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) sparked a push towards women's empowerment. According to CEDAW, nations must promote women's and girls' equal rights and end discrimination against them in all spheres of life.

By guaranteeing women's equal access to and opportunities in political and public life, including the right to vote and to run for office as well as in the areas of employment, healthcare, and education, the Convention lays the groundwork for achieving gender equality between men and women. State parties commit to implementing all necessary actions, including exceptional temporary measures and legislation, to ensure that women can exercise their fundamental freedoms and rights as human beings. It is mandatory for nations that have ratified or acceded to the Convention to implement its provisions legally. Additionally, they pledge to provide national reports at least every four years detailing the steps they have taken to abide by their treaty responsibilities.

Currently there is no policy in place targeted towards the implementation of 50/50 gender participation; this is recognised by South Africa's 5th Periodic Report on the Implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). Despite the Southern African Development Community's (SADC), 50% representation aim set forth in the SADC Protocol on Gender and Development the quota remains a voluntary party quota by the governing party. The ANC has a voluntary 50% quota on the national level, with 45% women in parliament. While this quota should be decentralised to local government level, it has not been done.

In the absence of legislation, the Commission for Gender Equality (CGE) continues to assess how well various ministries and organisations are adhering to the policy and legal frameworks that already govern gender transition. In addition, the CEDAW has advocated for the development of specialised mentoring and training programmes for women candidates and elected officials, as well as leadership and negotiation skills workshops for potential and current women leaders. Since then, the South African government in 2013 launched the National School of Government (NSG). In addition to

strengthening the transformation of public service by developing women and people with disabilities for senior management roles in the public service, the Accelerated Development Programme from NSG aims to expedite the advancement of middle managers in the public service by providing them with the skills and competencies required for senior management positions. The Executive Development training is an additional training aimed at providing participants with the expertise and skills they need to lead teams and function as senior managers (CGE, 2020).

Hence, there exists an urgency to integrate gender perspectives with all the post-2015 millennium development goals (UNDESA 2015; UN-HABITAT 2008). A more recent global statistic indicates that in 2023 women held an average of 35.4% seats in local governments, which confirm their disadvantage within a traditionally male dominated leadership that characterizes the public policy and decision-making domain (UNDESA 2023b). Another possible reason that may contribute to the lack of women involvement in local government is the absence of gender awareness (referred to as 'gender blind') in planning and policymaking, not considering how women's diverse and unique roles, needs and limitations may impact on their involvement in public decision-making processes, thereby constraining them to participate effectively (Meena, 2018).

Some of the pivotal limiting factors to women's' participation in governmental processes in Africa include sociopolitical dynamics, traditions and customs related to culture, tribal, political, marital, family life and the socialisation attached to these practices. These limitations are entrenched by the patriarchal and associated gender and socio-cultural constructs that characterise African societies, which have further negative consequences for the participation of women in politics and local government structures, thus confirming the distinct relationship between women's involvement in public policy and decision-making and the historical traditional patriarchal institutions such as the family, marriage, and religion.

2. THE 1995 BEIJING PLATFORM FOR ACTION (BPFA)

One of the most crucial agreements on gender equality that nations have accepted is the Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA), which was adopted in 1995 and has significantly advanced worldwide progress, particularly in developing nations. It confirmed a goal of empowering women and made it possible to create strategies and action plans that are now incorporated into national plans and policies. In order to enhance the development and assessment of gender programmes and policies, the BPFA also placed a strong

emphasis on the creation and distribution of gender-disaggregated data and information. The following were identified as the BPFA's top priorities during the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995:

- **Women and poverty** – eliminate and address the needs of women in poverty.
- **Violence against women** – prevent and eliminate violence against women by ensuring equality under the law and practice.
- **Women and the economy** – promote women's economic rights, access to employment, including control over economic resources by harmonising work and family responsibilities for women and men.
- **Women in power and decision-making roles** – increase women's capacity to participate in decision-making and political leadership.

3. NATIONAL CONTEXT

The South African post-apartheid government introduced many policies that target gender equality in the country. The following legislative frameworks and policies were passed post-1994 to improve the living conditions of women and to create a peaceful gender balance within South African society.

According to the Republic of South Africa's 1996 Constitution, every South African citizen has a right to have their democratic principles of equality and human dignity upheld and strengthened. All citizens, even law-abiding government officials, have an obligation to uphold these human rights ideals and improve the living conditions of their fellow citizens. The Employment Equity Act Established, 1998, Act No. 55 aims to eliminate unfair discrimination and promote fair labour practices in the workplace. Affirmative action measures are also implemented to address the disadvantages that designated groups face in the workplace and ensure their equitable representation in all occupational categories and levels of the workforce. The accompanying Skills Development Act, Act 97 creates an enabling framework for skills development by turning the workplace into an active site of learning and development.

In 2009, the Gender Equality Strategy Framework (GESF) for Public Service was implemented. The foundation of the framework is the advancement and defence of women's human rights, including those related to disability and their dignity. In order to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment in the public service, all government

departments are required to incorporate the following eight concepts into their departmental action plans:

- Transformation for non-sexism.
- Establishing a policy environment on women's empowerment and gender equality.
- Meeting equity targets by ensuring women's full participation and decision-making by employing 50% women at all levels.
- Creating an enabling environment.
- Gender mainstreaming in all work of the department.
- Empowerment through capacity development for women's advancement and gender equality.
- Providing adequate resources for advancing gender equality.
- Accountability, monitoring and evaluation.

The South African Human Rights Commission (2017:24) reports that "Systemic inequalities relating to the sexual division of labour, and the inaccessibility of other streams of income, resources, land, and social services such as education, continue to prejudice women and gender minorities, even though the above depicts a legislative framework that should enable the achievement of gender equality." To address gender inequality in whatever form it may appear in society and the economy, a comprehensive strategy is required (LGSETA, 2019).

One indicator of development is the proportion of women in the public sector, the government, the legislature, and the private sector. A meagre 5% of senior management roles were occupied by women in 1995. South Africa has made headway towards the objective of having 50% of women in senior management roles, having filled 43% of them. The Eight-Principles Action Plan for Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality, which is part of the public service, serves as a measuring tool for the degree to which coverage is given to women's entrepreneurship, the growth of women's enterprises, poverty reduction, right to work, career pathing, and equality and non-discrimination under the legislation (Pilane-Majake, 2022).

4. SOUTH AFRICAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT CONTEXT

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, holds that the state is committed to the following: a high standard of professional ethics must be promoted and maintained; efficient, economic, and effective use of resources must be encouraged; public administration must be development-oriented, services must be provided impartially, reasonably, equitably and without bias; people's needs must be responded to, and the public must be encouraged to participate in policymaking, public administration must be accountable; transparency must be fostered by providing the public with timely, accessible, and accurate information, to maximize human potential; good human-resource management and career-development practices must be cultivated; public administration must be broadly representative of the South African people, with employment and personnel management practices based on ability, objectivity, fairness, and the need to redress past imbalances to achieve broad representation (Chapter 10, Section 195).

A significant number of local government laws include gender advancement as a core component of the government's mission. Numerous legislations and policies specifically mandate that local governments uphold and advance women's rights. Among them are:

- The Employment Equity Act (1999)
- The Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act (2000)
- National Framework for Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality (2002)
- Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act (2003)
- Communal Land Rights Act (2004)

Article 4 of the SALGA constitution commits organised local government to advancing the interests of women in local government through the 50/50 campaign and made it possible for the SALGA Women's Commission to be formally introduced during the Women in Local Government Summit in 2010, which ensures women will hold 50% of elected leadership roles in local government (SALGA Women's Commission, 2010 – 2016).

According to the 2020 census conducted in all 257 municipalities across the country, there are 23,230 people in the management landscape, including mayoral and councillor roles. This detailed study found that 14,209 of these positions are currently held by men, and just 9,021 by women. After the 2021 municipal elections, local government representation pointed to 63% men and 37% women. These numbers however do not reflect the voter registration patterns indicating 55% women and 45% men (SALGA, 2023).

The SA Constitution is the supreme law of the land and sets out interdependent institutions. The legislature (parliament makes the laws) executive (cabinet executes) and the judiciary ensures that laws are interpreted in the correct way (courts). The state is organised around national, provincial and local spheres of government. The different spheres of government have different competencies and the three spheres work intergovernmental to achieve the objectives of the development state. A municipality is defined as consisting of the elected officials (politicians), appointed officials (administrators) and the community (various formations). Local government is the sphere of government closest to the people.

The Constitution (RSA,1996) compels the 257 municipalities to take on a development role by assigning certain developmental responsibilities to the local sphere of government. According to the Constitution (1996), the objectives of local government are to provide democratic and accountable government for local communities, ensure the provision of services to communities in a sustainable manner, promote social and economic development, promote a safe and healthy environment; and encourage the involvement of communities and community organisations in the matters of local government (RSA,1996). A municipality must strive within its financial and administrative capacity to achieve the stated objectives. Accordingly, a municipality must structure and manage its administration, budgeting and planning processes to give priority to the basic needs of the community and to promote the social and economic development of the community and participate in national and provincial development programmes (RSA,1996).

This implies that every municipality must strive to achieve the above objectives, considering (a) "its financial, human resource and administrative capacity, and (b) the powers conferred on it". The above principles have been translated into various policies and legislation to create uniformity for the human resource practice of the country's public service. In South Africa, "wall-to-wall" municipalities were demarcated to ensure that all areas of the country have access to development and governance. To address the various developmental needs of different parts of the country, municipalities were classified. The entire sphere of local government in South Africa is made up of municipalities, of which there are three distinct categories:

- **Category A municipalities** are large cities, with exclusive, executive and legislative authority within their municipal boundaries.
- **Category B municipalities** are local municipalities that share executive and legislative authority with Category C (or district) municipalities.
- **Category C municipalities** are district municipalities that contain several local municipalities (South Africa, 1996; Cloete, 2019)

However, the Constitution enables municipalities to provide services to communities through internal or external mechanisms. These mechanisms include municipal departments, municipal entities or service delivery agreements with third parties.

A municipal entity is defined as an operational arm, through which a municipality provides functions or services to its community. Municipal entities are accountable to the municipality or municipalities that established the entity and are required to adhere to a service delivery agreement that is consistent with the municipality's strategic plans and performance objectives (Institute of Directors South Africa, 2022). Municipal entities are independent organizations that perform municipal services on behalf of a municipality, although the municipality retains control through majority shareholding (Institute of Directors South Africa, 2022).

5. WOMEN'S REPRESENTATION IN SOUTH AFRICA'S MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT

During the transition to democracy feminist scholars and activists were concerned to get women into government through campaigns during the negotiation process. The Women's National Coalition (WNC) and the African National Congress (ANC) Women's League (ANCWL) encouraged special measures to get women into government on all three spheres. The ANC approved a 30% voluntary quota for women on the national sphere before the first democratic election and expected similar quotas to be introduced on provincial and local level. This changed to a 50% quota in 2009. Currently South Africa has 45% women in parliament. The picture is, however, less rosy on provincial and local government spheres where women generally struggle to get into local government (Beall, 2005).

The electoral system on local government differs from that of the other two spheres that rely on a closed list proportional representation system. In the local government there is a Proportional Representative (PR) list as well as candidates standing for election in wards. The PR list system benefits women when it is a zebra list (every second name that of a

woman), but in wards women compete directly with men, and due to voters favouring men, women often do not get elected from wards. Majola's (2019) research confirmed this view that most women councillors for local government are elected from the PR lists.

Ward committees consist of the ward councillor who acts as the chairperson with a maximum of ten community members of a specific ward (Thornhill, 2008: 502). Piper and Deacon (2009:431) argue that ward councillors have more influence and that municipalities must honour the obligation to provide training, as well as administrative and clerical support to eradicate inequities with regard to women's representation. They also express a strong view that ward committees should be included in consultation around issues of the budget, the Integrated Development Plans (IDP) and service agreements.

Most research done with women on local government shows that women have a lower skillset and resources than men and that they also face limited debate conditions (Walsh, 2006). Women find it difficult to be present at meetings, because they must travel through dangerous areas and underdeveloped infrastructure, leading to them often being placed in ceremonial positions. Low levels of education and a lack of experience hinder their ability to express needs and interests. They also fight an uphill battle against pervasive sexism, and exposure to stereotypes used by men to silence them (Walsh, 2006:93). Women in rural areas are the most disadvantaged, due to traditional role prescriptions and the influence of traditional leaders, some of whom are also local councillors.

As early as 2005, Beall argued that the capacity within local government needs to be raised to include an understanding of the gender dimensions of local government responsibilities and services. She suggested that on the level of the decentralization of government local issues such as housing, living conditions and infrastructure should be on the political agenda. She also raised concern about the influence of traditional leaders who are unelected officials but exercise more power than elected officials. Often women are discouraged to stand as candidates for local government or they fear a pushback from men and therefore do not stand.

McEwan's (2003) research with women in diverse municipalities showed that women suffer from a lack of information and training and that training was often done at times inconvenient to women when they are busy with domestic chores. Women do not have the same flexibility as men. Her research also showed that women were sidelined within local government where the structures of governance are very male dominated and where there exists a lack of an understanding of structural inequalities and discrimination. Some male

officials have expressed the view that treating women differently would be considered “special treatment” to the disadvantage of men (McEwan, 2003:478). She also pointed out that progress with gender equality was excluded as indicators in the Integrated Development Programmes (IDP).

6. OBSTACLES AND CHALLENGES FOR WOMEN IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Various studies concluded that women face hindrances and obstacles through their entry into local government, whether as elected or appointed officials. Apart from being held back by low levels of education women in local government find the environment hostile, and male dominated. They must contend with verbal abuse, scorns, intimidation, dirty jokes, and sexual harassment (Majola, 2019). A 2013 survey of the International Capital Market Association (ICMA) found that 60% of women reported disrespectful comments from other councillors. Women also do not have support structures on which they can draw. There is also a high turnover of Councillors due to an excessive workload (Majola, 2019: 283). Many women drop out after one term, also because of discouragement by family and communities. It was also found that there were no mechanisms to report discrimination or ways to ensure that discrimination is dealt with.

Given the lack of skills, the competition around resources, physical violence and assassinations of councillors have increased in the last decade. Since 2004, 80 councillors have been killed (Majola, 2019). Unfortunately, the data for assassination was not gender disaggregated to tell us how many women and how many men died in attacks. Majola’s (2019) study that involved six local municipalities found that 20% of respondents (men and women) reported they have been discriminated against based on race and gender. Those who complained about gender discrimination were all women, 44% said there were no procedures for reporting problems.

Sebola (2015), argues that often local government officials get improper training from consultants that call themselves “knowledge experts”, which has also led to an underdevelopment of local government training. Another unintended consequence is that people with good leadership skills then move on to the provincial and national levels, depleting the local government of talented leaders. Municipal performance is undermined by a shortage and availability of skills (Majola, 2017).

The White Paper on Local Government (1998) indicated that training in the local sphere was inefficient and unresponsive to the training needs of local government officials. In this

the role of the South African Local Government Association (SALGA) becomes very important for capacity building because the Women's Commission of SALGA is playing an important role. It has been shown that training needs include training in budgeting, financing, strategic planning, service delivery, human resource development and change management. Respondents in surveys also indicated that they need training in basic skills such as reporting, report writing and would welcome induction training. Training needs to be tailored for low levels of education of councillors.

According to Bell, Van Niekerk and Nel (2015), when women enter local government traditional hierarchies that involve gender and age are disrupted and to maintain control men will organize themselves into "ingroups", distinguishing themselves from "outgroups". There will be intragroup similarity (men only), but intergroup diversity, where age and gender are two of the criteria (Bell et al, 2015). These male networks are called homosocial capital. Men benefit from male networks from which women are excluded (Bjarnegard, 2013). This leads to inefficiency in management and governance. Managements need to be diverse, and effectiveness comes about because managers can respond to different constituencies and different needs. Women bring different skills, insights, and ways of interaction to positions, e.g., women are focused on interpersonal relations whereas men are task oriented. If men continue to believe that leadership is their domain there will be ineffective and gender insensitive leadership (Bell et al, 2015). Women will therefore also be excluded from opportunities for promotion.

In their study of 261 managers of local government in South Africa, Bell et al (2015:55) found that men and women have different leadership qualities, but that they are equally effective as groups. Women are more interpersonal and collaborative and men more directive. There is a strong correlation between effectiveness and levels of education. It is therefore of utmost importance that levels of education are increased and that training courses fit the levels of existing education that will enhance communication, decision making, creative thinking and planning.

Duties of councillors are found in the Municipal Systems Act, Section 54, that also includes a code of conduct for councillors and staff. These duties include (Majola, 2019): act as representatives of the communities they serve, provide leadership in councils, act as custodians and guardians of public finance, promote the cooperative governance ethos, provide effective oversight, be accountable to local communities and report back to their constituencies council matters and to be responsive to the community they serve.

It is important to note that the responsibility in municipal decision making involves action in concordance with the Standing Rules of Order, the party caucus, ward committees and community organizations, through council committees and in relation to functions designated to them by the Executive Mayor. A distinction needs to be made between a focus on gender mainstreaming (as a form of women's empowerment) that is government policy and is promoted in the National Development Plan, as well as the Gender Policy Framework for Local Government (2011).

With regard to gender mainstreaming the expectation exists that a gender needs analysis will be mainstreamed in government policies also on the local level. This can only be done if government officials (men and women) have been trained to do gender analysis. Before a gender analysis can be implemented on all levels of government, government officials should have the skill sets just to do their work with efficiency. Only then can gender mainstreaming begin. There must be a two-step flow process – (1) the appropriate skill sets for government officials, (2) gender training in gender mainstreaming. And training material does exist. In 2012, Nkwana and van Dijk published an article that did an evaluation of the training programmes for women in local government of the Local Government Leadership Academy (LOGOLA).

The Enterprise University of Pretoria (2019) recommended appropriate training on the correct level as well as the possibility of studies at gender programmes at tertiary institutions in South Africa. The SALGA Women's Conference 2022 reported back on a needs analysis that was done based on a survey of representative councillors.

According to the assessment of this training the following was recommended:

- Annual offerings of Women Leadership Programmes given the large numbers of applicants and need for skilled women leaders;
- Mentorship support for future iterations of learning opportunities that draw on the alumni of the pilot programme;
- Facilitated implementation hubs that serve as problem-solving spaces in which ongoing engagement and peer learning are encouraged and supportive communities of practice nurtured;
- Leverage the network of women leaders who have completed this inaugural programme (SALGA 5th National Conference, 2022).

6.1 Women and the 4th Industrial Revolution

The 4th Industrial Revolution has already proved to have a disproportionately negative impact on the economic prospects of women. This underrepresentation is mirrored within South African local governments where women's voices in decision-making processes related to technology and innovation continue to be limited. Female talent remains one of the most underutilized business resources through lack of progression or untapped from the onset. Although women are, on average, more educated than men globally and participate more fully in professional and technical occupations than 10 years ago, their chances to rise to positions of leadership are only 28% of those of men globally. Women continue to make up less of the labour force overall than men, and where they participate in the formal economy their earnings for similar work are lower. The talents of half the world's potential workforce are thus often wasted or underutilized due to barriers on the path to women's successful workforce integration (World Economic Forum, 2016).

The research also found that almost twice as many organisations still view fairness and equality as the key drivers behind efforts to hire more women. The fact that women make up a smaller share of the workforce means that the economic gender gap may widen even further. The Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) presents opportunities for women in local government that should be acknowledged and exploited. The specific two challenges are highlighted below:

6.1.1 Digital Literacy

The varying levels of digital literacy among women leaders and officials are most felt by female leaders and managers. Schwab (2016) highlights the digital divide as a significant barrier to leveraging 4IR technologies, which is particularly pronounced in the South African context due to the high poverty, unemployment and inequality levels. This severely restricts the women leaders in particular to implement and manage digital transformation initiatives.

6.1.2 Underrepresentation in STEM

Given women's low participation in STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematical) professions, one of the fastest-growing areas of job creation, women stand to gain only one new STEM job for every 20 lost across other job families, whereas the ratio for men is one new job for every four lost elsewhere (World Economic Forum, 2016). The underrepresentation of women in STEM fields and leadership positions further

exacerbates the challenge. As reported by Ely, Ibarra, and Kolb (2011), the lack of women in these critical areas limits diversity of thought and innovation which are considered essential components for navigating the complexities of the 4IR. To overcome the underrepresentation of women in STEM and leadership roles requires concerted efforts to create pathways for women's advancement. This includes initiatives such as mentorship programs, networking opportunities, and policies promoting gender parity in leadership that can help bridge the gap.

The drivers of change propelling the 4th Industrial Revolution will thus heavily disrupt some of the job families with the largest share of female employees, such as office and administrative roles, but also some of those with the largest female gender gap, such as manufacturing and production, architecture, engineering, and computer and mathematical roles. If current industry gender gap trends persist and labour market transformation towards new and emerging roles in computer, technology and engineering-related fields continues to outpace the rate at which women are currently entering those types of jobs, women are at risk of losing out on future job opportunities while aggravating hiring processes for companies due to a restricted applicant pool and reducing the diversity dividend within the company. According to Pervaiz, Akram, Ahmad Jan & Chaudhary (2016), "There is a unique opportunity at present to address long-existing gender divides in the economy. If we don't take advantage of this, we will see more gender segregation in the workforce, affecting wages and livelihoods, not to mention greater economic inequality in society as a whole".

7. MUNICIPAL HIERARCHY AND DISTRIBUTION OF TASKS

Section 2 of the Municipal Systems Act define the municipality as the community (the various formations organised and unorganised sectors of society), the council (elected officials) and the administration (appointed officials) of which the community can be considered the primary stakeholder through the institutional ward committees.

The community can be considered the end-users of services but are also involved in the policy making process. The ward committee is the functional arms and legs of participatory democracy and together with the ward councillor is responsible for what can be considered grassroots governance or bottom up democracy. Municipal councillors in the system are responsible for policy making and political oversight. The distinction is made between ward councillors and proportional representative councillors.

All municipalities or municipal entities have accounting officers. This functionary is considered the most senior administrative officer and performs various management and executive responsibilities as defined by the various local government legislation, notably the Municipal Systems Act (No. 32 of 2000) (as amended) and the Municipal Finance Management Act (No. 56 of 2003) (as amended). The accounting officer, as the administrative leader has the task of ensuring an organizational culture of knowledge management (KM) which includes monitoring and evaluation, management of the political and administrative interface as well as coaching and mentoring of, specifically, the managers reporting to the functionary.

Executive managers are the second layer of managers who normally report to the accounting officers. They manage departments (or directorates as they are referred to in some municipalities). They are responsible for high-level strategy interpretation and innovation, as well as coaching and mentoring of the senior managers who report to them. The third layer of managers then are these senior managers who manage divisions and are sometimes called divisional heads. They report directly to their executive manager and are responsible for strategy interpretation, communication as well as coaching and mentoring.

Middle managers are the fourth layer, managing sections or units and reporting directly to their senior manager. They are responsible for strategy implementation (execution of the agreed organizational strategies), gathering data and generating organizational reports. They also perform a coaching and mentoring role for the staff who report to them.

Lastly, at the bottom of the management hierarchy, are junior managers, sometimes referred to as first-line managers. They report to their middle managers and occupy positions such as foremen or superintendents and are responsible for implementation of strategies and monitoring and evaluation of strategies.

Municipal Governance & Functions

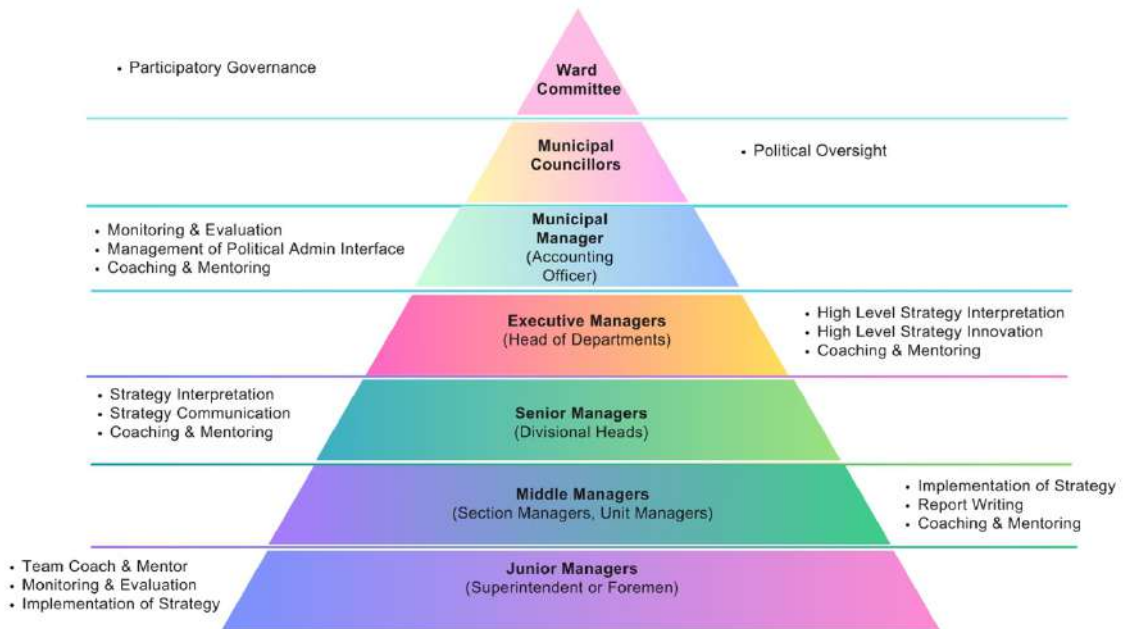


Figure 1: Municipal Governance and functions (source: author)

8. INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR ASSEMENT OF SKILLS

The South African Constitution enjoins municipalities to employ competent (in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes) staff for the effective performance of their functions in order to fulfil the South African government’s commitment to building a capable local government and improving sound governance in municipalities (Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs [CoGTA], 2022).

The Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (2021) introduced the Municipal Staff Regulations (MSR) in 2021. The main objective of the regulations is to create local government that is fair, efficient, effective, transparent and to create development-oriented human resource management and career development practices. It further aims to ensure that high standards of professional ethics are nurtured within local government to strengthen the capacity of municipalities to perform their functions by recruiting and appointing suitably qualified and competent persons. In addition, the aim is to establish a cohesive HR management system with adequate control measures.

The Municipal Staff Regulations have far-reaching implications for human resource management and capability within the local government sector specifically in the area of human resource development stating that human resource development must:

- Support the achievement of the municipality's goals set out in the IDP by providing critical skills that ensure the delivery of quality services.
- Promote the development and retention of competent municipal staff, including the development of technical, professional and specialist staff who have the required qualifications and skills.
- Support the employment equity objectives of a municipality.
- Be based on high quality provision and effective workplace learning and development practices, including coaching, mentoring, on-the-job learning, and opportunities for the practical application of skills in the workplace.
- Seek to continuously improve its results and the returns on learning investments, by defining measures of success, conducting regular evaluations, and improving the impact of learning, training, and development; and
- Be designed to support and reinforce other capacity-building programmes in municipalities.

The MSR, 2021 advocates that on an annual basis the Human Resource Manager, the Skills Development Facilitator and senior management of the municipality should determine the skills needs of the municipality by facilitating an annual assessment that measures the municipality's performance against its integrated development plan; identifies the roles (reasons) that are constraining service delivery, affecting community satisfaction or the efficient and effective internal operations of the municipality; and analyses the performance reviews and personal development plans of staff members employed in critical roles and job categories.

The annual assessment should involve meetings (evidence) with each municipal department to—

- Evaluate the reasons for poor service delivery and performance (capability) by the department if any;
- Determine whether a lack of skills (competency) has contributed to the poor performance;
- Evaluate stakeholder complaints to establish whether poor service is a result of a lack of skills in certain key roles; identify whether these problems are in critical roles and job categories which may need to be tracked more closely; and
- Identify the skills problems and needs associated with these roles.

This involves meetings with the senior management team of the municipality to—present an aggregate assessment of the skills needs arising out of the department analysis; and validate the priority skills needs to be addressed by the municipality in the forthcoming year (evidence). A municipality must conduct regular evaluations of the workplace skills plan and personal development plans as well as their implementation, and adjust its learning programmes to improve its effectiveness, including the impact on reducing the skills constraint on service delivery.

The Municipal Staff Regulations call on managers in particular to play a much more “hands on” role in creating an enabling human resource management environment, through a mandatory human resource plan and sets out the specific roles of the different municipal actors.

8.1 The Manager

A manager must link HRD to the priorities of their function, the integrated development plan and to the outcomes of the performance management process; monitor skills needs and constraints that have, or may have, a major impact on the achievement of their objectives and report on these during the institutional skills needs analysis process; develop, report on and review progress with the personal development plans of the staff members who report to the supervisor; ensure that development proposed in the personal development plans of the staff members who report to the supervisor is relevant to the functions of the municipality; provide coaching to and support for the development of their staff members; provide input into the content of training programmes, if relevant; allow their subordinates time off for training, as agreed in training schedules and plans; and actively facilitate the application of learning back on the job (MSR, 2021).

The MSR states that a municipality through the manager must support its staff members by:

- Clarifying the skills required for jobs;
- Identifying relevant skills needs and developing opportunities to satisfy the skills needs;
- Identifying new knowledge, attitudes, skills and habits (KASH) required by staff to support their career growth and progression;

- Creating learning opportunities which will allow their staff to develop the skills and expertise to enable them to compete effectively for placement in new or vacant posts; and
- Ensuring that skills development is a key performance area in senior managers and supervisors' performance agreements.

This is aimed at promoting career development through consultations with staff members supported by a skills development process that involves the planning, skills assessment implementation and review with the support of HRD professionals (MSR, 2021).

A municipality must ensure that every manager annually reports on progress on implementing staff personal development plans and the other programmes contained in the workplace skills plan; the effect of implementing personal development plans for staff is evaluated; evaluations, using standard benchmarks determined by the Minister, respond to priority learning programmes and contribute to the development of skills which result in improved performance and service delivery; and regular skills development reports and evaluation results are integrated into the wider capacity building initiatives within the municipality; and reported to the relevant provincial and national capacity building structures (MSR, 2021).

8.2 Staff Members

A staff member must actively manage their own development (whether for current role or future career opportunities) based on their personal development plan; participate actively in skills audits; develop and reflect on their personal development plans with their supervisor; commit to development that coincides with the municipality's priority skills; participate actively in all forms of learning (training and development) which will assist the staff member to meet agreed needs; stay abreast of and apply new knowledge and skills in their field of expertise; and provide feedback on the outcomes, effectiveness and relevance of training and development received (MSR, 2021).

8.3 Skills Development Facilitator

The skills development facilitator must facilitate the adoption of the Workplace Skills Plan, including liaising with the registered trade unions, facilitate the implementation of skills development programmes with supervisors, staff, and external training providers; liaise with the Local Government Sector Education Training Authority (LGSETA) and ensure that the municipality meets all the requirements of the LGSETA (MSR, 2021).

8.4 Chief Financial Officer

The chief financial officer must ensure that proof is provided to the LGSETA that all funds obtained from the LGSETA and the 1% budgeted towards skills development have been used for skills development purposes (MSR, 2021).

8.5 Training Committee

A senior manager must chair the municipality's training committee. The training committee must have an equal number of managers and representatives of staff. The representatives of the municipality should include the integrated development planning manager, the skills development facilitator, the manager responsible for human resources, individual and institutional performance managers, and the chief financial officer. The representatives of staff members must include representatives of the registered trade unions recognised by the municipality or, in their absence, staff members who are representative of the municipality's staff as a whole. The training committee must consult and make recommendations to the municipal council on proposed improvements to skills audit processes as well as findings and priorities emerging from the skills audit presented by management; the draft workplace skills plan; management's regular skills development report; and skills development policies of the municipalities.

The Municipal Staff Regulations introduces a competency framework for various occupational skills that will ensure the employment of competent staff in local government so as to achieve higher levels of service delivery in municipalities.

9. EVALUATING COMPETENCIES IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

9.1 Competency Framework

The MSR competency framework provides municipal practitioners with a transparent framework that enables municipalities to recruit and select the right people through the identification of the critical competencies of defined occupations. The competency framework further enables individuals to identify, appreciate and understand their strengths and development areas. It also serves to clearly identify the development interventions to ensure they attain the competencies required for optimal performance. For managers, the competency framework serves as a tool to assess the competencies of individuals in terms of current jobs and occupations and to assess the readiness of incumbents (Municipal Staff Regulations, 2022).

The competency framework identifies 5 basic components viz.

- 9.1.1 Knowledge, qualification and experience** – This can be considered the basic requirement of the incumbent in terms of what they bring to the organisation. In this instance knowledge refers to the breadth and depth of what is required to perform the job. A qualification is that which is obtained by an individual through a process of formal assessment by an independent body. Finally, experience is tacit knowledge considered as that which is gained through life experience and inherent to the individual.
- 9.1.2 Professional/functional competence (competence in the functional and technical areas of the job)** – These are indicative of the specialized skills that an individual has cultivated within their professional domain. The specific competencies serve as manifestations of the knowledge and practical proficiency required by individuals for effectively dealing with the complexities, ambiguity and challenges faced by individuals in the day to day activities at work.
- 9.1.3 Personal competencies** – These refer to the components or attributes of the individual that enables him/her to perform optimally. It includes elements such as proactiveness, resilience, change readiness, cognitive ability and, teachability, lifelong learning. These elements are indicative of one's attitude, energy, bias to action and tenacity which are critical to optimally deliver in a role.
- 9.1.4 Public Service Orientation competencies** – This relates to the ability of the individual to reflect one's personal capacity and orientation in interaction with others in such a manner that positive and constructive long term relationships are developed and maintained in delivering the desired services. It includes elements such as interpersonal relationships, communication and service delivery orientation.
- 9.1.5 Management/Leadership competencies** – These refer to the ability to work with and through others on tasks and the ability to mobilize around a common cause. The ability to lead ethically and with integrity and to coach and mentor and motivate others. The regulations also introduce a completely new HRD governance regime for municipalities and is perfectly aligned with the

Integrated Management Framework discussed earlier in the text and place the manager at the centre of human resource management and measurement (Municipal Staff Regulations, 2022).

10. ASSESSMENT OF COMPETENCIES IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The MSR, 2021 introduces a governance regime for assessment of skills in local government and advises a particular approach to ensure that the overall objectives of the MSR are reached. Although not explicitly stated this must be extended to also include elected officials.

10.1 Skills Needs Analysis

Every municipality must conduct a skills needs analysis that analyses the municipality's skills needs and assesses the skills constraints on service delivery in the municipality as a whole and in each department or function. The skills needs analysis must identify the priority skills needs, which if effectively developed will have a marked impact on the municipality's performance. Must take into account the related institutional capacity needs and workplace skills plan of the municipality; and cover all major roles in the municipality, including management and leadership, technical, specialist, professional and administrative roles and specified priority skills needs. The skills need analysis must be based on the effectiveness of the implementation of previous priority skills development programmes and interventions; and an analysis of individual staff member personal development plans to identify common skills needs across job categories (MSR, 2021).

10.2 Skills Audits

A municipality must conduct a skills analysis using programmes or systems determined by the Minister to ascertain the skills needs of staff members in respect of their current roles. Skills audit may comprise, biographical audits, which includes information on the educational qualifications and experience of the staff member, perception-based assessments; and evidence-based assessments, including assessments using psychometric instruments. Skills audit must be conducted once every five-years within 24 months from the election of the new council of a municipality. The purpose of a staff skills audit within a municipality is to determine the gaps associated with every staff member's current and future skills needs in the municipality. The staff skills audit should be conducted on a five-year cycle as part of the integrated development planning process and reviewed annually (MSR, 2021).

10.3 Skills Audit Process

The skills development facilitator performs a critical role in the entire process through the identification of the needed competencies. For middle management roles and staff members below middle management roles, the Skills Development Facilitator must enable access to, or make available, the competency set to the supervisor of the incumbent undergoing the audit. For technical, administrative, or functional roles undergoing audit, the Skills Development Facilitator must enable access to, or make available, the competency set to the supervisor of the incumbent undergoing the audit.

The manager of the incumbent must use the Local Government Skills Audit Questionnaire in conjunction with the appropriate role competencies and definitions obtained from the Skills Development Facilitator to — assess and review the role competencies and definitions; and to rate the incumbent against the competencies. This by implication also refers to recognition of prior learning. Identify the competency gaps from the skills audit and address them in the personal development plan (see the competency audit tool attached). In this process the work skills plan must be developed offering a variety of human resource development options.

What follows are the identified skills gaps in the local government sector.

11. IDENTIFYING SKILLS GAPS IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The LGSETA draw a distinction between scarce and critical skills.

11.1 Occupational Shortages (Scarce Skills)

Hard-to-fill positions are those where it takes an organisation more than six months to locate a suitable applicant with the necessary experience. Because there is a greater demand for workers in some occupations than there are workers who are available and willing to work under the current work and employment conditions, employers may find it difficult or impossible to fill open positions, leading to a skills shortage Labour Market Intelligence Partnership (LMIP), 2020).

Based on the examination of WSP data, occupational shortages, skills gaps, and sectoral priority occupation lists were created. These efforts were bolstered by discussions with local government leaders from each of the nine provinces. Additionally, this approach was informed by a number of research projects, such as "Critical Analysis of the Competency

Levels for Ward Committee Member”” and "LGSETA Scarce and Critical Skills Strategy linked to Placement, Mentoring and Coaching Framework”.

Municipalities (and other bodies) recognised 4,605 occupational shortages based on the 2021 WSP submissions. Compared to the 3 360 posts recorded the year before, this represents an increase. Please take note that this is not a complete list of openings, rather, it is a list of positions that stakeholders have determined to be in high demand. 53 569 positions were open as of March 2021, according to STATS SA. According to the current evaluation used to support the WSP submissions, this indicates that approximately 8.6% of all openings are classified as occupational shortages (LGSETA, 2021-2022).

11.2 Skills Gaps (Critical Skills)

The identification of skills gaps benefited greatly from the examination of the supply and demand for skills through the study of the WSP submissions and other research connected to skills. Critical skills, or a gap in the competency or skill set of current employees, are referred to as the “ "skills gap" in this context. The top 20 skill gaps by Major Organising Framework for Occupations (OFO) Group are shown in the table below. WSP ATR data analysis was used to identify the top 20 skills needs, which will be reinforced by additional stakeholder interaction. It also shows the quantity of employees for whom the skill shortages have been documented through WSPs and the degree to which each OFO Major Group is affected (LGSETA, 2021-2022).

Table 1: List of Critical Skills Gaps

Skills Gap	Total Staff
1. Supervisory	605 825
2. Financial Management	571 842
3. Peace Officer Training	372 066
4. Protocol Management	296 737
5. Computer Literacy	235 039
6. Service-Oriented Delivery – Municipal Service Areas	154 388

7. First Aid in the workplace	152 957
8. Adult Education and Training (AET) – ABET Levels 1, 2, 3 and 4	143 672
9. Health and Wellness	135 098
10. Presentation Skills	132 944
11. Project Management	128 474
12. MS Excel 2010 Intermediate	124 243
13. MS Word Intermediate	121 777
14. Ethics	110 340
15. Report Writing	100 446
16. Occupational Health and Safety	94 701
17. Emotional Intelligence	91 079
18. Local Government Law & Public Administration	88 946
19. Employee Assistance	77 425
20. Fire Fighting – Elementary course	60 873

12. COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK FOR WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

Competencies are the skills, knowledge and behaviour (attitudes) that lead to successful performance. The framework outlines various competencies, which are grouped into three areas of development or clusters (table above): Fundamental, Core and Elective. For each competency there is an explanation of what it means in practice and some examples of behaviour. Each cluster builds on the one before it, starting with the fundamental cluster, moving on to the core cluster, elective cluster. The clusters and related competences are meant to be discrete and cumulative. The elective cluster offers four stages of development, each of which builds on the one before it. For example, a person exhibiting senior-level competency should naturally be exhibiting early and junior-level proficiency as

well. While not meant to be all-inclusive, these behavioural indicators offer a clear and consistent picture of what is expected of participants in the women empowerment program (LGSETA, 2019). The competency framework is a summary of how a project for women's empowerment can be developed in an organised manner.

The process of competency management involves identifying the competencies that differentiate high performers apart from mediocre performers across all organisational activities, building a framework, and utilising it as the basis for various initiatives, including training and development. This involves applying best practices for the development of a competency framework for the empowerment of women in local government.

The following significant factors should be considered essential for the effective design and implementation of empowerment programmes for women.

- The curriculum needs to correspond with the abilities that a prospective leader actually needs.
- A strong educational foundation specifically created for women is required for the programme.
- While men and women view and approach leadership in many similar ways, there are biological, neurological, psychological, and communicative distinctions which impact how men and women interact to one another, process information, manage stress, and experience leadership.
- In stressful circumstances, women are believed to be more inclined than males to seek out social interaction, respond more quickly to positive feedback, encourage individual and group improvements, place the blame for poor performance on themselves, and communicate in cooperative endeavours.
- Although assertiveness, strength, and transparency are valued in many leadership development programmes, female leaders tend to apply more relational and collaborative techniques that are less compatible with these masculine leadership philosophies.
- Expanded duties and educational opportunities are necessary for the development of leadership competencies.
- The development of leaders, the advancement of careers, and the expansion of social/human interactions and values all depend on exposing aspiring leaders to outstanding leader role models and mentors through behavioural modelling (professional networking strategies).

- Women reported that challenges to pursuing their own leadership development included being excluded out of important networks and not having the opportunity to exchange experiences with other women in leadership development.
- The most effective ways to change behaviour are through the use of various, integrated learning elements, including action learning, multi-level feedback, leadership training, and networking.
- Participants were introduced to the empowering process of critically analysing their own personal challenges and identifying opportunities for leadership development by listening to other women sharing their leadership experiences.
- The implementation of various learning methodologies enhanced work performance, innovation management, commitment to the organization's mission, and equality.
- Subtle gender prejudices and an absence of women with leadership potential inside an organisation can cause conventional management strategies to fail, regardless of the context of development actions.
- The negative consequences of expecting or encouraging women to demonstrate behaviours associated with conventional male leadership have already been demonstrated by the outcomes of traditional leadership training.
- Development initiatives especially require relationships, integrity, self-awareness, and individual responsibility. Women were more inclined to strive for leadership opportunities than women who experienced traditional leadership approaches and were afraid of receiving unfavourable reviews if they were given the chance to work with other women, advance their leadership knowledge, and boost their self-esteem.
- It has been demonstrated that giving women the same training as men or implementing a learning approach that encourages them to behave like males in leadership roles is ineffective and unfair to women who employ alternative leadership styles (LGSETA, 2019).

13. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR THE PROPOSED COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK

One fundamental component in both of the suggested courses is called personal development, and it may be offered to officials and legislators as a group. But as stated earlier in the text, previous research recommended that a women empowerment project be presented through two distinct programmes, specifically:

- **Leadership and Management Development Programme for Empowerment of local government women officials:** Building the capacity of officials in mainstreaming gender through all organisational processes, policies and functions, as well as improvements to institutional culture and gender power relations
- **Leadership and Management Development Programme for Empowerment of local government politicians:** Building the capacity of politicians towards becoming a community resource by focusing on topics such as communication, advocacy, mobilising communities but also building business acumen or entrepreneurial skills development as well as improvements to institutional culture and gender power relations. A balanced approach between theory and skills should be maintained during the program's development, taking into consideration that participants have a common theoretical understanding of how gender has shaped and is shaped by society, as well as how this is applied in all organisations and societal structures. If the social context's base is unequal, empowerment cannot be attained. The significance of tracking and assessing the training's effects should be kept in mind (LGSETA, 2019).

14. FACTORS INFLUENCING WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP GAPS

Three main factors have been highlighted by studies as the key causes of women's lack of leadership in the workplace; these are addressed below (Rarieya, 2015):

- **Structure of leadership paths and positions in organisations**

Men have more access to information and support because they are more likely to hold positions of authority inside organisations and because they have established professional and social/political networks. It's often difficult for women to access this network of assistance. The power relations between men and women therefore play a potentially critical role in the access of women to leadership positions and their performances in those positions.

- **Perception of women leaders**

For women in leadership roles, traditional social gender norms, cultures and practices present a significant obstacle, as mentioned above. Qualities that are typically associated with women are not traditionally connected with leadership roles. People tend not to find women appealing or typical when they exhibit assertive and authoritative actions, which are associated with leadership. In men, what is considered forceful is irritating in a woman. Women must therefore choose between likeability and competence.

- **Women leaders' self-perception**

A psychological glass ceiling can be caused by the societal preconceptions that many women internalise. Many women might believe they are not as capable of holding positions of leadership. Because they feel less entitled, they are less likely to take risks and exhibit forceful, self-promoting behaviours, which are essential qualities of a leader. In addition, some women in positions of leadership experience "queen bee syndrome". They do not encourage their female juniors' rise to leadership because they see their title and status as the result of an individual's struggle.

15. SECTION SUMMARY

The national context of South Africa, with its commitment to gender equality enshrined in the Constitution and various legislative frameworks, sets a promising stage for women's advancement. However, the local government context reveals a more complex scenario. Despite legislative frameworks and policies aimed at promoting gender equality, women's representation in South Africa's municipal government remains uneven, with significant barriers to their full participation in leadership and decision-making roles.

This section has highlighted the critical role that international conventions play in shaping national policies and local governance practices. It also underscores the unique challenges faced by South African municipalities in translating these global commitments into tangible outcomes for women in leadership. The disparity between policy and practice suggests a need for a more nuanced understanding of the barriers to women's participation and the development of targeted strategies to overcome these obstacles.

It is imperative that the lessons learned from both global and local contexts inform the approach to enhance women's representation and participation in municipal governance. The alignment of South Africa's efforts with international standards and best practices is crucial. However, the adaptation of these strategies to the specificities of the South African context is equally important. Bridging the gap between global aspirations and local realities can pave the way for a more inclusive and equitable governance landscape reflecting the diversity and potential of South African society.

SECTION 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1. INTRODUCTION

This section presents the methodology followed by the research results, and concludes with recommendations and an examination of the challenges hampering women participation in local government. This is followed by the research strategy and research approach as well as the project scope and phases. The research results and findings are then discussed together with recommendations and the conclusion.

2. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The primary objective of the research is to provide a research report on the findings of an assessment of skills audit on women in leadership and management positions in local government focussing on councillors and officials in municipalities.

The secondary objectives of the research are addressed in the literature review as follows:

1. Determine skills and competencies of women who are currently in leadership positions within municipalities;
2. Conduct an analysis of current skills profile of women in leadership positions and determine the skills and competence gaps between the skills requirements and current skills sets;
3. Identify and define skills, competencies and qualifications required to effectively deliver on the operational requirements of the occupied positions;
4. Determine skills that are essential for the positions occupied by women in order to thrive in a fourth industrial revolution world of work;
5. Determine critical and scarce skills for the women in the local government sector;
6. Make concise recommendations on skills audit process within municipalities based on international and regional best practices;
7. Develop and recommend a training plan to address the identified skills gap.

3. RESEARCH SCOPE

The units of analysis in this research are 422 respondents from 19 South African local governments (municipalities) in 5 provinces. To ensure a geographical spread of the municipalities included in the study, care was taken to purposefully select municipalities situated in both inland and coastal regions. Initially 40 municipalities were selected across the nine provinces to include, category A (metropolitan), Category B (local municipalities and Category C (district municipalities). Care was taken that this also represented rural and urban municipalities.

The levels and scope of the analysis were to obtain a sample of municipal managers (executive, senior, middle managers, and junior managers), councillors in purposefully selected South African municipalities.

A structured survey (using questionnaires) was conducted in person and online in municipalities (metropolitan, local and district) to obtain an assessment of current competencies. The sampled municipalities represented below also had the governance performance index rating as well as the AG office audit outcomes. The process of entry into the municipality followed the following:

- A letter from the LGSETA forwarded to the Municipal Manager and the Skills Development Facilitator introducing the project.
- Letter forwarded to the municipality requesting online onboarding meeting with Municipal Manager and the Skills Development Facilitator and the provincial LGSETA manager to reach consensus on site visit date.
- Researcher forwarded site visit requirements to the assigned champion in order to ensure a smooth site visit.

Although the three-step process was followed, the cooperation of the municipalities was extremely poor and support was also not always forthcoming. From an initial sample of 40 municipalities only 19 participated in the study.

Table 2: Municipal Sample

Municipality	Governance Performance Index 2023	CoGTA Risk Rating 2023	Audit General Audit Outcomes 2023
Metros			
1. Mangaung Metro	8 of 8	Dysfunctional – High Risk	Qualified with findings
2. City of Ekurhuleni Metro	2 of 8	Stable	Unqualified with no findings
District Municipalities			
3. Fezile Dabi DM	19 of 23	High Risk	Qualified with findings
4. Frances Baard DM	5 of 23	Low Risk	Unqualified with no findings
5. ZF Mgcawu DM	9 of 23	Low Risk	Unqualified with no findings
6. West Coast DM	2 of 23	Stable	Unqualified with no findings
7. Garden Route DM	3 of 23	Stable	Unqualified with no findings
Local Municipalities			
8. Metsimaholo LM	156 of 205	High Risk	Qualified with findings
9. Midvaal LM	10 of 205	Stable	Unqualified with no findings
10. Merafong LM	139 of 205	High Risk	Disclaimed with findings
11. Lesedi LM	70 of 205	Medium Risk	Unqualified with findings
12. Hantam LM	25 of 205	Low Risk	Unqualified with no findings
13. Gamagara LM	154 of 205	High Risk	Unqualified with findings
14. Emthanjeni LM	121 of 205	Medium Risk	Qualified with findings
15. George LM	20 of 205	Medium Risk	Unqualified with no findings
16. Stellenbosch LM	8 of 205	Stable	Unqualified with no findings
17. Oudtshoorn LM	33 of 205	Medium Risk	Unqualified with findings
18. Bergrivier LM	6 of 205	Low Risk	Unqualified with no findings
19. Senqu LM	45 of 205	Low Risk	Outstanding audits

The scope of the research project was to obtain a sample of elected women (councillors) appointed women (staff) in select South African municipalities. A structured survey was conducted in person and, in some cases, online in municipalities (metropolitan, district and local municipalities) to obtain a comprehensive perspective on the competencies of

women leaders the local government sector and other potential constraints on optimising their roles in local government.

4. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

A mixed-methods approach was taken for the research, applying both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods and instruments, with data sources including both primary and secondary sources. Strategies for the collection of primary data included face-to-face interviews, focus group discussions and a survey. The mixed-methods approach allowed the researchers to develop an in-depth understanding of the aspects measured in the survey, since the qualitative instruments were designed to provide context for the qualitative findings.

The research population defined for this study included:

- all four levels of management within the local government sector, i.e., executive, senior, middle and junior managers as well as non-managers (survey and focus group discussions)
- key informants, including experts (both academics and practitioners) conversant in the local government sector (face-to-face interviews).

The unit of analysis in this research is South African local governments (municipalities). To ensure a geographical spread of the municipalities included in the study, care was taken to purposefully select municipalities situated in both inland and coastal regions. This was randomly selected and conducted solely by the University of the Free State research team.

5. RESEARCH INSTRUMENT DESIGN AND DATA COLLECTION

The design of the research instruments was informed by the literature review, the competency framework of the Municipal Staff Regulations (2021) and previous research conducted by the Enterprises University of Pretoria (2019) “LG National Women Empowerment Programme”.

Semi-structured interview schedules for both the focus group discussions and face-to-face interviews with key stakeholders were informed by the variables (items) measured in the survey instrument. In applying this strategy, the data collected by means of both the quantitative and qualitative instruments presented a holistic assessment of the research

question, providing both trend data as well as a qualitative understanding. The latter provided contextual data with which to better interpret the former.

This strategy of collecting complementary data was further developed in the data collection strategy. Female managers (executive, senior and middle managers) and councillors were required to complete both the survey instrument and to participate in a focus group discussion where the themes covered in the survey were further explored. In the sampling, a total of 18 local government entities were purposefully selected.

Table 3: Survey sample realization

Province	#Staff	#Councillors	Number of Completed			
			Women Assessment			
			Non-Managers	Councillors	Managers	Total Completed
Free State						
Fezile Dabi District	181	13	4	1	0	5
Metsimaholo LM	857	40	15	4	5	24
Gauteng						
City of Ekurhuleni Metropolitan	0	0	0	1	7	8
Midvaal Local	926	27	15	5	8	28
Merafong Local	996	54	31	0	6	37
Lesedi Local	699	24	21	2	2	25
Northern Cape						
Frances Baard District	138	12	31	1	2	34
ZF Mgcawu District	159	23	7	0	5	12
Hantam Local	150	13	18	0	3	21
Gamagara Local	479	24	3	0	7	10
Emthanjeni Local	371	15	24	5	3	32
Western Cape						

Garden Route District	6104	183	6	0	0	6
George Local	1541	51	24	0	3	27
Stellenbosch Local	1251	45	42	1	8	51
West Coast District	613	40	3	6	3	12
Oudtshoorn Local	838	25	24	6	5	35
Bergrivier Local	413	10	47	1	4	52
Did not indicate	0	0	3	0	0	3
	15716	599	318	33	71	422

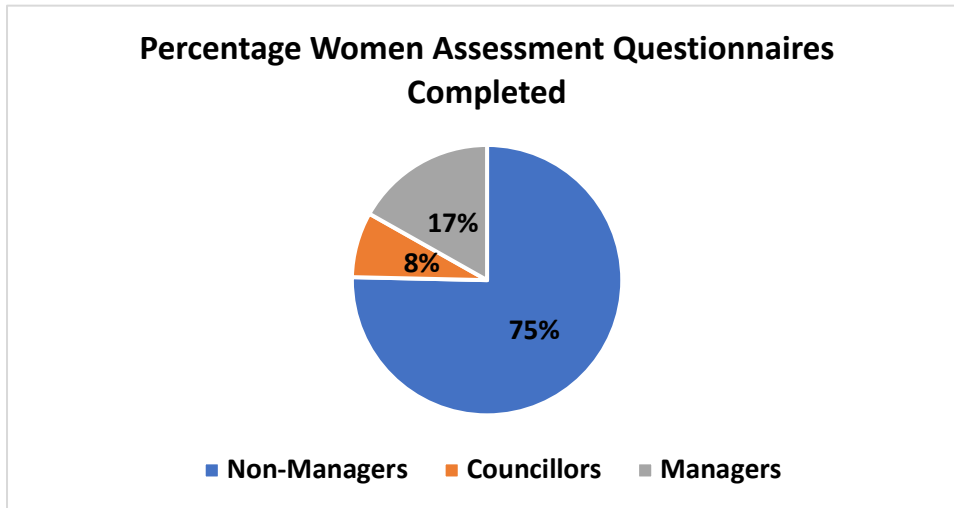


Figure 2: Percentage Women Assessment Questionnaires Completed

In the end, 75% of the participants that completed the questionnaire were non-managers, which provided valuable insight into the competencies of future managers. The 17% sample of female managers who participated provided further insight. Only 8% of councillors completed the survey. Why so few managers participated cannot be explained despite the best efforts of the researchers. In most cases managers were too busy and undertook to submit responses online, although from the research responses it is clear that this did not always materialise.

Table 4: Method of survey completion

Institution	Province	Questionnaire
Fezile Dabi District	Free State	Completed in person
Metsimaholo LM	Free State	Completed in person
City of Ekurhuleni Metropolitan	Gauteng	Completed in person
Midvaal Local	Gauteng	Completed in person
Merafong Local	Gauteng	Completed in person
Lesedi Local	Gauteng	Completed in person
Frances Baard District	Northern Cape	Completed in person
ZF Mgcawu District	Northern Cape	Completed in person
Hantam Local	Northern Cape	Completed in person
Gamagara Local	Northern Cape	Completed in person
Emthanjeni Local	Northern Cape	Completed in person

Institution	Province	Questionnaire
Garden Route District	Western Cape	Completed in person
George Local	Western Cape	Completed in person
Stellenbosch Local	Western Cape	Completed in person
West Coast District	Western Cape	Completed in person
Oudtshoorn Local	Western Cape	Completed in person
Bergrivier Local	Western Cape	Completed in person

Table 5: Realisation of focus group discussions

Key Informant	Portfolio	Municipality	Focus Group	Interview
Councillors	Councillors	West Coast DM	1	0
Josephine Nampa	SCM	Gamagara KM	0	1
Jacqui Samson	Former Executive Director	Drakenstein LM	0	1
Women	Finance	Merafong LM	1	0
Women	Infrastructure	Stellenbosch LM	1	0
Women	Corporate Services	Stellenbosch Local	1	0
Women	Finance Department	Stellenbosch Local	1	0
Women	Councillors	Oudtshoorn Local	1	0
Women	HR	Garden Route	1	0
Total			7	2

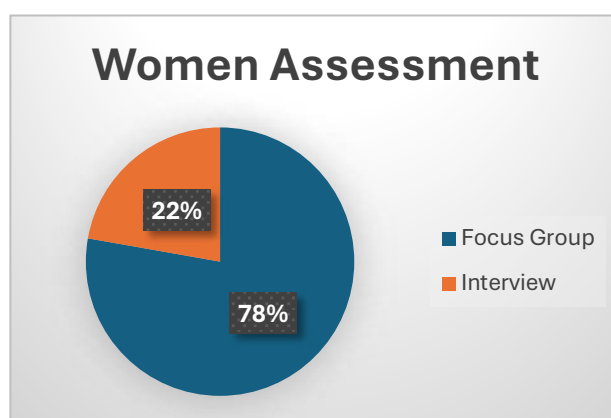


Figure 3: Percentage of Realization of focus group discussions and One-on-One Interviews

6. RESEARCH APPROACH

A consultative approach that involved a wide array of industry experts in the design and roll-out of the project was adopted. The consultative approach ensured that experts in the field became involved in the design of the project. The consulted experts ranged from governance experts to local government practitioners, and interactive sessions were held to:

- pinpoint the most suitable research design and methodology.
- survey literature on international best practice on women in local government.
- survey literature on international best practice regarding planning praxis in general and women in local government.
- identify critical elements the experts perceived as essential to include in data collection instruments.
- create the desired climate to ensure maximum participation from research participants for the project.
- establish monitoring, control and reporting mechanisms among the research team, field workers and the client.

7. PROJECT SCOPE AND PHASES

As illustrated in Figure 4 below, the study was conducted in five phases. These phases are discussed in this section.

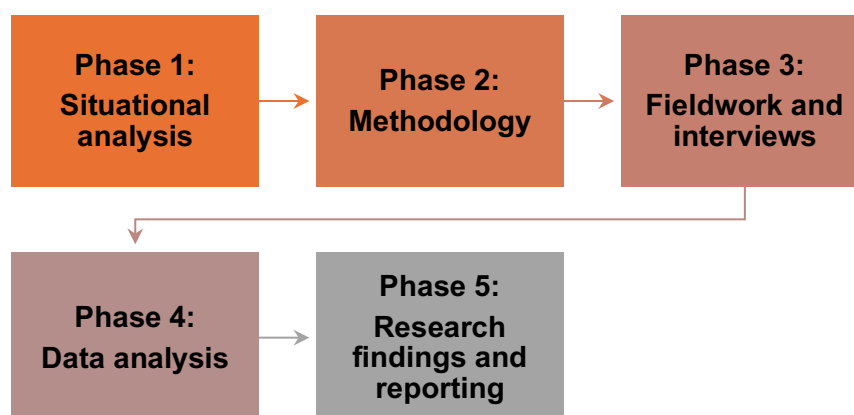


Figure 4: Project research phases (source: authors)

Prior to the roll-out of the project, a letter was drafted and sent to forty randomly selected municipalities and municipal entities to explain to them the purpose, nature, scope and importance of the project. A letter was also obtained from the LGSETA for the municipalities to agree to participate in the study. This was considered a necessary step to create a positive climate for the project and to give the research team the necessary credibility and legitimacy to conduct the fieldwork.

Five main activities, which were aligned with the secondary research objectives, were undertaken during this phase:

- complete a literature review to determine the status of women in local government.
- contextualise women in local government by consulting key informants.
- identify the major women in local government framework.
- determine the best implementation framework for the development of women in local government.
- identify the role players to assist with implementation of women empowerment programs in South Africa.

Phase 3 entailed finalising the data collection instruments and setting up the site visits to the municipalities to conduct the focus group interviews and administer the survey questionnaires in person. The questionnaire was designed to test the four competency dimensions namely , beginner, developing , proficient and advanced. The context section allowed research participants the opportunity to respond to a three point Likert scale where 1 = agree, 2 = don't know/not sure and 3 = disagree. In conceptualizing the scale, don't know /not sure (2) was to be interpreted as uncertainty in the understanding, interpretation. (See information on participants and municipalities in Appendix D)

Setting up appointments with the municipal officials proved very challenging, as municipalities were busy with either the adjustment budget or the Integrated Development Plan processes. This hampered participation in some instances (a recommendation in this regard is made in the section dealing with recommendations).

Survey data was transferred from Google Forms to Excel spreadsheets and then transferred to and analysed in SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). In some municipalities the data was recorded on an electronic device, and some participants preferred to complete a hard copy of the survey.

The final phase entailed the verification and cross-referencing of the findings and identifying key observations by the research team. The findings presented in this report cover:

- An analysis of the competencies of women councillors in local government
- An analysis of the competencies of women managers in local government
- An analysis of the competencies of non-managers in local government
- A proposed implementation model for capacitating women managers in local government.

SECTION 5: RESEARCH RESULTS AND FINDINGS

1. INTRODUCTION

Scientific theory and professional practice are deeply intertwined. During the process of creating evidence-based knowledge, theory cannot be divorced from practice. Thus, any scientific inquiry can only be the result of a phenomenon observed in the reality of practice. Irrespective of the theoretical soundness of information needed, the statistical validity and reliability of any survey are influenced by, *inter alia*, the following issues:

- Respondents may not understand the content of the research questions.
- Respondents could experience a language barrier given that there are eleven official languages in South Africa and English (the language of the survey) is most participants' second language.
- Respondents may not have the time to complete a survey.
- Respondents may not be willing to provide accurate and or honest answers for different reasons. For example, they may not feel comfortable providing answers that portray themselves in an unfavourable light or that might be perceived by someone to be critical and thus as a threat to their job security (Schutte, 2023).

This section reports on the research results and interpretation of findings emanating from the survey, examining the challenges faced by women in the local government sector. The questionnaire considered the competency framework as identified by the Municipal Staff Regulations:

- **Knowledge, qualification, and experience** – This can be considered the basic requirement of the incumbent in terms of what they bring to the organisation. In this instance, knowledge refers to the breadth and depth of what is required to perform the job. A qualification is that which is obtained by an individual through a process of formal assessment by an independent body. Finally, experience is tacit knowledge considered as that which is gained through life experience and inherent to the individual.
- **Professional/functional competence (competence in the functional and technical areas of the job)** – These are indicative of the specialised skills that an individual has cultivated within their professional domain. The specific competencies serve as manifestations of the knowledge and practical proficiency

required by individuals for effectively dealing with the complexities, ambiguity and challenges faced by individuals in the day to day activities at work.

- **Personal competencies** – These refers to the components or attributes of the individual that enables him/her to perform optimally. It includes elements such as proactiveness, resilience, change readiness, cognitive ability and, teachability, lifelong learning. These elements are indicative of one's attitude, energy, bias to action and tenacity which are critical to optimally deliver in a role.
- **Public Service Orientation competencies** – This relates to the ability of the individual to reflect one's personal capacity and orientation in interaction with others in such a manner that positive and constructive long-term relationships are developed and maintained in delivering the desired services. It includes elements such as interpersonal relationships, communication, and service delivery orientation.
- **Management/Leadership competencies** – These refer to the ability to work with and through others on tasks and the ability to mobilise around a common cause. The ability to lead ethically and with integrity and to coach and mentor and motivate others. The regulations also introduce a completely new HRD governance regime for municipalities and is perfectly aligned with the Integrated Management Framework discussed earlier in the text and place the manager at the centre of human resource management and measurement (Municipal Staff Regulations, 2022).

The research findings were interpreted in the following way, the participants could rate their responses as beginner (limited or no experience with basic understanding but lacks practical application), developing (some experience and knowledge in the process of developing foundational skills), proficient (moderate to solid experience and demonstrates a good understanding and proficiency in the subject) or advanced (extensive experience and expertise, demonstrating exceptional skill and knowledge).

The purpose is not to assess the findings per identified competency but to offer a broad overview. The researcher interpreted the proficient and advanced categories as positive self-assessment by the participant, being mindful that participants may rate themselves in a higher category e.g., advanced when they may very well be at a developing level or even at beginner. Notwithstanding, a self-assessment score of 50% is considered satisfactory.

2. SECTION A: PROFESSIONAL/FUNCTIONAL COMPETENCIES

This section reports on the assessment for women councillors, managers and non-managers. The section on professional functional competencies include aspects such as financial management, protocol management, computer literacy, first-aid in the workplace, health and wellness, project management, ethical conduct, report writing, occupational health and safety, local government law and public administration, planning, monitoring and evaluation, interpersonal skills, community/stakeholder engagement, client customer services, change management, legal skills, risk management, quality management, coaching and mentoring, public speaking, data processes and analysis and proactiveness. **See Appendix A.**

Although the primary focus was on women managers and councillors, the results for non-managers are also reported on as they are the potential future managers and leaders in the organisation. The graphs are interpreted in the areas of strengths and areas for improvement as well as suggesting what can be done about this. The full data set of research results are presented in Appendix A, B, C, D and E.

2.1 Analysis for Councillors

Councillors show a varied range of proficiency across different competencies. They have relatively lower advanced proficiency in computer literacy (27.3%) compared to their proficiency in presentation skills (21.2% advanced). This suggests a stronger inclination towards verbal communication and engagement over technical computer skills. In the First-Aid, Health and wellness areas the proficiency in first-aid aid was notably low, with only 3.1% at an advanced level and a significant 40.6% at the beginner level. For the health and wellness competencies, a large portion were at the beginner level (33.3%), indicating a potential area for improvement in personal wellbeing and emergency response readiness for councillors. For client customer service the combined categories are 63% and for community and stakeholder engagement it is 68%. These high percentages speak positively of the majority of women's skills in interpersonal relationships and ethical behaviour in councils. The areas ethical conduct and project management showed a strong foundation in ethical conduct and project management, with 34.4% advanced in ethical conduct. Beginner and developing skills for risk management are at 76%. That means that three quarters of the councillors do not know how to manage risks. This implies that councillors know and understand the importance of ethical guidelines and project

management principles, which are considered critical for governance role performed by councillors and leadership roles.

2.2 Analysis for Managers

The assessment survey showed higher levels of proficiency in the area of professional functional competencies. In the area of financial and protocol management, women managers showed the highest levels of competencies. For all the categories the managers score 70% or above, except for legal skills (46%) for risk management (59%), Client services is at 99%, ethical conduct at 94%, planning at 91%, change management at 88%, project management at 80% and mentoring at 78%. A significant portion of managers are proficient or advanced in financial management (80.5%) and protocol management (81.1%), underscoring their competencies in managing resources and adhering to formal standards of conduct. The women managers also showed high levels of proficiency in computer literacy (95.7% proficient or advanced) and presentation skills (82.6% proficient or advanced), essential for effective administration and communication. The areas of project management and ethical conduct reflected managers' strong competency in overseeing projects and maintaining integrity within their roles.

2.3 Analysis for Non-Managers

The non-managers showed a diverse range of proficiencies. There is a noticeable gap in the area of advanced proficiency levels in financial (18.9%) and protocol management (38.1%), suggesting areas where non-managers could benefit from additional training to enhance their functional capabilities. A significant number of non-managers show proficiency in computer literacy (81.7% proficient or advanced), however a concerning level of non-managers are at the beginner level in the area of health & wellness (30.9%). For the occupational health and safety non-manager respondents, 75.1% indicated below proficient in report writing (61% below proficient), highlighting potential areas for skills development to enhance workplace safety and communication.

The analysis reveals clear patterns of proficiency across women councillors, managers, and non-managers within the local government sector. While managers demonstrate high levels of competency in areas critical to their leadership roles, both councillors and non-managers exhibit areas for improvement, particularly in health and wellness, ethical conduct, and technical skills. Investment in continuous professional development,

especially in areas of emerging deficiency, will not only improve individual performance but also contribute to more efficient and effective governance.

In conclusion it is clear that there is a marked difference between appointed staff and elected councillors. Councillors are not elected because of their skill sets, but because they have the support of the voters who vote them into power. It is therefore important to do training in the necessary skills right at the time when councillors enter local government after a local government election and to do refresher courses with councillors who have already been in the local government, especially to move those who are in the "beginner" or "developing" bands to the next level.

3. SECTION B: PERSONAL COMPETENCIES

This section reports on the assessment for women councillors, managers and non-managers. The section on personal competencies include aspects such as, facilitation, decision-making, critical thinking, problem solving, conducting and managing meetings, time management, problem analysis, active listening, integrity, motivating, interviewing people, networking, people driven management, perseverance and conflict management. These competencies are needed to perform the work necessary for local government. **See Appendix B.**

3.1 Analysis for Councillors

Based on the data, it is evident that women councillors exhibit strength in various areas. When the categories are combined in the areas of proficiency and advanced, 82% of women councillors excel in "active listening." Additionally, 84% demonstrate "integrity," 74% display strong "problem-solving" skills, 79% are adept at "motivating" others, 70% exhibit "critical thinking" abilities, and they also demonstrate "perseverance." Furthermore, 61%% possess effective "time management" skills, 70% excel in "problem analysis," , 74% problem solving and 67% are skilled in "conflict resolution". The categories that show "advanced" competencies of 30% or higher are particularly noteworthy. These categories include "active listening" (38%), integrity (58%), motivating (44%), and perseverance (42%). The biggest percentage, at 58%%, is attributed to integrity. Therefore, women councillors conduct operations at a strategic level, utilising their essential skills in problem-solving and critical thinking.

In general the councillors indicated a balanced proficiency across personal competencies, with decision making and active listening standing out. Councillors demonstrate a strong

proficiency in decision making (37.5% advanced) indicating effective communication skills and the ability to make informed decisions. The areas of critical thinking and problem solving show room for improvement to further enhance analytical and problem solving skills. In the area of facilitation skills the score was relatively strong (21.2% advanced), however, time management indicated lower advanced proficiency levels.

Only 38% of women councillors in this band possess the necessary abilities to conduct and manage meetings, indicating a need for additional development in this area to move them from proficient to advanced. Women in leadership positions in government at the tactical level need more help to enhance their abilities, which will lead to better implementation and monitoring. These skills also speak to the institutional culture of local governments where men often undermine women who chair meetings, through interrupting and unsolicited remarks. Women need mentoring in how to overcome these obstacles. There needs to be a concerted effort to move councillors in this category along to the advanced band.

It is noteworthy that a significant number of women who are classified as competent (proficient) demonstrate a strong aptitude for critical thinking (36%) and problem-solving (44%) abilities. The low levels of critical operational abilities in the proficient band, such as facilitation (39%), conducting and managing meetings (38%), interviewing people (35%), and people-driven management (26%), are a cause for concern. These categories are essential for the fundamental operations of the primary business functions in governance. The absence of strategic implementation is clearly reflected in the limited proficiency of women in conducting and managing meetings, facilitating projects or operations, and undertaking fundamental organisational tasks such as interviewing individuals and people-oriented management.

3.2 Analysis for Managers

In the area of managers the assessment showed that women managers showed high proficiency levels across personal competencies, reflecting their leadership and operational roles. They showed high proficiency in facilitation (24.6% advanced) and conducting and managing meetings (50% advanced) showcases women managers' abilities to lead discussions and manage group dynamics effectively. In the areas of critical thinking and problem solving, female managers showed higher levels of proficiency in critical thinking (42.9% advanced) and problem solving (42.9% advanced), that can be considered essential for strategic planning and overcoming challenges. In the areas of

decision making (40% advanced and time management (45.7 %) they showed high scores that ? indicating managers' capability to make timely, effective decisions and manage their responsibilities efficiently.

3.3 Analysis for Non-Managers

The analysis of non-managers (future managers) displayed varying levels of proficiency. A noticeable gap in advanced proficiency in facilitation (11.6%) and active listening (30.1%), point towards areas where non-managers could benefit from enhanced communication and listening skills training. The data indicates that 18.6% are advanced in critical thinking and 22.7% in problem solving which point to a gap in the potential for the development of analytical and problem solving skills.

The research showed lower advanced proficiency in decision making (18%) and time management (25.9%), suggesting a need for focused training to improve these essential competencies.

The analysis of personal competencies across councillors, managers, and non-managers within the local government setting reveals distinct proficiency patterns. Managers display strong leadership and operational competencies, while councillors and non-managers show balanced skills with identified areas for improvement.

4. SECTION C: MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES

The indicators in this section measure the management and leadership competencies of councillors and managers in local government. These skills are needed to perform the work necessary for local government. The section on personal competencies include aspects such as relationship building, organisation, active listening, planning and strategizing, participative management, capacity to lead and motivate, conflict resolution, social skills, interpersonal skills, inclusiveness and diversity management people management, ability to see and develop potential, ability to delegate tasks ,fostering teamwork and collaboration, analytical thinking, conceptual thinking, strategic thinking, discipline of staff, mentoring of staff, coaching of staff and knowledge management. **See Appendix C.**

4.1 Analysis for Councillors

This competency in this category is about managing and developing human potential and managing the people in local government. From the data (aggregated for the categories proficient and advanced) it is clear that women councillors are strong on “inclusive and diversity management” (59%), “active listening” (76%), “relationship building” (64%), “planning and strategizing” (61%), “conflict resolution” (61%), “interpersonal skills” (61%), “people management” (64%), “ability to develop potential” (67%), “analytical thinking” (63%), “conceptual thinking” (63%), and strategic thinking (58%). The last three abilities are very important for developing and implementing policy, but they do not exceed 70%, except for active listening. These skills are important to develop human potential inside the organization and councillors in the proficient band need to be developed to move to the advanced category.

If “advanced” category is excluded the majority of women councillors fall within the proficiency band of these competencies, but for all the categories it is less than 40% except for “active listening” that is 42%. It is concerning that in the category for “advanced” competencies all are below 40%, some of them far below 40%.

The section showed that women councillors exhibit proficiency in management and leadership competencies, with some areas showing stronger than others. Councillors show a strong proficiency in organisation (40.6% advanced) and relationship building (30.3% advanced), indicating effective management skills and the ability to cultivate positive relationships. Proficiency in the areas of active listening (33.3% advanced) and planning & strategising (30.3% advanced) were lower. The assessment for conflict resolution (18.2% advanced) and social skills (31.3% advanced) are areas where councillors could benefit from further development.

Knowledge management should be singled out as a very important core competency since good governance cannot be done without being informed through knowledge that is current and up to date. 43% of councillors are still developing the skill of knowledge management in the categories beginner and development. Training is necessary to advance knowledge management. It is also clear that mentoring and coaching need more attention in order to create more one-on-one relationships between mentors and staff, creating channels to pre-empt problems that may later lead to disciplinary action or women exiting from councils.

4.2 Analysis for Managers

Managers demonstrate high proficiency levels in the areas of active listening (43.5% advanced) and planning and strategising (44.1% advanced). Women managers also showed strong proficiency in relationship building (37.7% advanced) and organisation (39.1% advanced). They further scored high for conflict resolution (28.6% advanced) and inclusiveness & diversity (33.8% advanced), essential for creating harmonious and diverse work environments.

4.3 Analysis for Non-Managers

The non-managers showed gaps in advanced proficiency in active listening (26.8%) and organisation (15.6%), indicating areas where non-managers could benefit from training to improve their listening and organisational skills. For planning and strategising 15.1% advanced in planning & strategising and 16.9% in relationship building. Women managers scored low in the areas for conflict resolution (14.8%) and social skills (21.0%).

The analysis of management and leadership competencies across councillors, managers, and non-managers within the local government setting reveals distinct proficiency patterns. Managers display strong leadership and operational competencies, while councillors and non-managers show balanced skills with identified areas for improvement. Targeted training programs aimed at enhancing specific management and leadership competencies can help build a more effective, communicative, and adaptable workforce. Investing in the continuous development of these competencies, especially in identified areas of weakness, will not only elevate individual performance but also contribute to the overall efficacy and responsiveness of local governance.

Again there is a marked difference between the elected councillors and the managers. For managers, the combined proficient and advanced categories all tally up to over 80% with many categories over 90% such as interpersonal skills, relationship building, to see and develop potential, delegation, strategic thinking, and analytical thinking. It is therefore imperative that managers are involved in determining what skills need to be developed in councillors.

5. SECTION D: PUBLIC SERVICE ORIENTATION COMPETENCIES

The indicators in this section measure the public service orientation competencies of councillors and managers in local government. These skills are considered critical for engagement with communities. The section on public service orientation competencies include aspects such as policy development and implementation, strategic skills, innovation skills, leading change, leading people, results-driven, focusing on delivery outcomes, promote continuous innovation, Batho Pele, public participation, municipal leadership, administration principles and skills, business communication, governance and compliance, customer care/client, monitoring and evaluation, integrated development planning and media relations and stakeholder engagement. **See Appendix D.**

5.1 Analysis for Councillors

Of concern should be that public participation is 76% for proficient and advanced, but for beginner and developing it is only 24%. Advanced and proficient categories for combined municipal leadership is 61%, for administration principles and skills is 59% and for governance and compliance it is 53%, customer care and client service it is 66%, integrated and development planning is 52%, media relations and stakeholder engagements is 50% and for strategic skills it is 53%. It is encouraging that the skills for public participation and customer care and client service are quite high – it shows an engagement with service delivery and community interaction. A total of 53% of councillors show limited skills for compliance (adding proficient and advanced), as opposed to 88% managers. It is also concerning that only 41% of councillors have skills in policy development and implementation, as opposed to 81% of managers and 52% in integrated development and planning, as opposed to 81% managers. Given the criticism of local governments of poor service delivery this situation needs attention. For all the skills, proficiency is less than 45%, with the lowest in stakeholder and media engagement at 27%.

Notwithstanding, the councillors demonstrate a range of proficiency in public service orientation competencies. Councillors showed strong proficiency in leading people (37.5% advanced) and are results-driven (40.6% advanced), indicating effective leadership skills and a focus on achieving outcomes. The area for policy development shows improvement in policy development & implementation (9.4% advanced) and strategic skills (6.7% advanced). Councillors showed proficiency in leading change (31.3% advanced) and innovation skills (9.7% advanced).

5.2 Analysis for Managers

Women managers indicate high proficiency levels across public service orientation competencies. They show a high proficiency in focus on delivery outcome (53.7% advanced) and being results-driven (48.6% advanced). They further show a strong proficiency in leading people (39.7% advanced) and leading change (33.3% advanced) which highlight the managers' leadership capabilities in guiding teams and navigating organizational changes. They showed proficiency in policy development and implementation (19.1% advanced) and innovation skills (27.9% advanced).

5.3 Analysis for Non-Managers

The non-managers display varying proficiency levels, identifying areas for growth. There is a noticeable gap in advanced proficiency in policy development and implementation (4.7% advanced) and strategic skills (6.8% advanced) which indicates a need for training to improve understanding and execution of policies and strategic planning. In the area of leading change and innovation, 11.0% advanced in leading change and 7.4% in innovation skills, indicating significant potential for development to enhance adaptability to change and innovative thinking. There are lower advanced proficiencies recorded in being results-driven (15.6% advanced) and focus on delivery outcome (22.5% advanced) which suggests a need for focused training to improve performance and outcome orientation.

The analysis of public service orientation competencies across councillors, managers, and non-managers within the local government setting reveals distinct proficiency patterns. Managers demonstrate strong leadership and outcome orientation, while councillors and non-managers show balanced skills with identified areas for improvement. Targeted training programs aimed at enhancing specific public service orientation competencies can help build a more effective, innovative, and adaptable workforce. Investing in the continuous development of these competencies, especially in identified areas of weaknesses, will not only elevate individual performance but also contribute to the overall efficacy and responsiveness of local governance.

6. SECTION E: INSTITUTIONAL CULTURAL CONTEXT

The indicators in this section measure the institutional cultural context of councillors and managers in local government. **See Appendix E.**

6.1 Analysis for Councillors

A significant percentage of councillors feel treated as equals in the workplace (84.4% agree), which is positive. However, awareness and implementation of sexual harassment policies appear to be areas for improvement, with only 48.5% aware of such policies and 33.3% noting their implementation. Experiences of intimidation (54.5% disagree) and bullying (69.7% disagree) are relatively lower among councillors, indicating a generally respectful workplace environment. The perception that intimidation discourages women from participating as councillors or managers is acknowledged by 42.4%, indicating a need to address barriers to women's full participation in local government roles.

6.2 Analysis for Managers

A majority of managers feel treated as equals (83.8% agree), yet there's a gap in the awareness (62.3% agree) and implementation (44.9% agree) of sexual harassment policies, highlighting a potential area for organizational development. Managers' report lower experiences of intimidation and bullying, with a significant percentage disagreeing with having faced such issues (77.1% disagree with pre-position intimidation, 85.5% disagree with online intimidation). However, the experience of bullying in the workplace is not explicitly captured. Managers recognize the impact of intimidation on women's participation (50.7% agree), suggesting an awareness of the challenges faced by women in achieving leadership positions within local government.

6.3 Analysis for Non-Managers

A good proportion of non-managers feel treated as equals (80.1% agree), there's a notable gap in the awareness (51.9% agree) and implementation (41.7% agree) of sexual harassment policies. Non-managers' report experiences of intimidation (72.2% disagree with pre-position intimidation, 73.8% disagree with online intimidation) and bullying, though specific data on bullying experiences is not provided. There's an acknowledgment of the deterrent effect of intimidation on women's participation (42.6% agree), pointing to the need for interventions to support women in local government.

Information on the context of the institutional culture around issues of sexual harassment, intimidation and bullying of women councillors are interesting. What is important is that the majority of women councillors have not experienced intimidation before being elected (72%), nor have they experienced online intimidation (76%) or physical intimidation (69%). Studies in the global North (Bjarnegard and Zetterberg, 2023) have shown that there is considerable intimidation and harassment of women politicians, so this finding should be cause for celebration. A total of 42% women, however, think that intimidation discourages women from making themselves available to become councillors. 33% of women councillors experienced intimidation before they were elected. That is one third of contestants and this is definitely a cause for concern.

What is of more concern is that only 54% women councillors feel that they are treated as equals in the workplace. What may contribute to this perception is women's care giving work around children. The majority of women say that there is no childcare facility, which means that the majority of councils do not have this facility. This comes as a disadvantage to women councillors and may also induce a lot of stress, because they may worry about their children's wellbeing and safety while they are at work. Equal treatment may, however, also be related to how men treat women and how men may reinforce stereotypical gender roles in councils.

Evidently, 33% women have experienced bullying in the workplace. This is a high percentage and not conducive to healthy work environments. All councils need to adopt a sexual harassment policy and orientate incoming women councillors on the sexual harassment policy and grievance procedures. Women should know that they have recourse when they experience sexual harassment. The findings for managers indicate that some women experienced intimidation (20%), online harassment (33%), physical intimidation (12%) and bullying (24%). It is concerning that only 62% managers are aware of the sexual harassment policies of councils and that only 49% think that they are being implemented. This confirms that institutional cultures have an impact on women's empowerment and disempowerment, even for women managers. If policies on bullying and sexual harassment are not implemented it contributes to a hostile work environment that is disempowering for women. Adopting a policy on bullying in the workplace is important. Women function sub-optimally when they are bullied. Childcare facilities should be established and subsidised from the government's budget (only 4% of women managers know of childcare facilities for local government). Childcare facilities are not a "nice to have", but an essential aspect of institutional culture for women to perform their work well.

The analysis of institutional cultural context across councillors, managers, and non-managers within the local government setting reveals critical insights into workplace culture, equality perceptions, and the impact of intimidation and sexual harassment policies. While there is a strong sense of being treated equally across all groups, gaps in the awareness and implementation of sexual harassment policies, experiences of intimidation, and the need for more supportive measures for women's participation highlight areas for improvement. Addressing these gaps through targeted training, policy reinforcement, and supportive interventions can contribute to creating a more inclusive, respectful, and supportive workplace environment for all local government employees.

7. BARRIERS TO COMPETENCY DISPARITY IN MUNICIPALITIES

Data were collected through unstructured interviews with participants, specifically targeting female employees within municipal settings. The interview questions were customized to address the study's objective goals that considered the contextual factors preventing or hinder women's skills and competency development in municipal government. Furthermore, the study explored issues surrounding staff attitudes and gender mainstreaming at the local government level. The interviews produced positive results, with responses analysed and interpreted in a detailed manner using thematic and narrative techniques. The subsequent outline provides insights into the emergent themes identified during the analysis. In interviews conducted as part of this study, the most significant obstacles to women's skills and competency disparities in municipal government were identified. The key issues and underlying concerns that emerged from the discussions are highlighted below.

7.1 Effective Change Management

The need for effective change management was emphasized to address the constant need for communication and cultural change within organisations (Mathur-Helm, 2016). Participants highlighted that resistance to change and implementation challenges often stem from a lack of credibility of HR professionals in the organization (Maphunye, 2017). Interviewees noted that compliance issues related to job descriptions and performance plans were noted as additional barriers to effective change management.

7.2 Competencies for Men and Women

The discussion focused on whether the skills and competencies required for women differ from those needed by men in administrative local government leadership roles (Bishu & Heckler, 2021). Participants expressed concerns about the underrepresentation of women in leadership positions, lack of trust in women for leadership roles, slow progression, and professional jealousy among women (Ndaba & Mabe, 2018).

7.3 Skills Development, Measurement and Management

Barriers to skills development, including lack of training and experience, were identified as hindrances to women's progression into senior management positions (Barkhuizen et al., 2022). Participants highlighted the importance of addressing skills gaps through human resource development audit and evidence-based systems for performance evaluation and training.

7.4 Gender Stereotypes and Bias

Gender stereotypes and bias were identified as pervasive challenges affecting women's skills and competency development in local government. Participants spoke of ingrained societal expectations and beliefs that often undermine women's authority and expertise in leadership roles (Singh & Dlamini, 2019). A participant's remark in this study that emphasises the potential impact of culture on the incorporation of gender perspectives into municipal government stated, "*We are innovative. We are very creative. We are very strategic. But when we have to put those strategies on the table, there will be weighed as to they are coming from a woman*" (ABANTU, 2004).

7.5 Lack of Mentorship and Networking Opportunities

Participants highlighted the limited access to mentorship and networking opportunities for women in municipal government, which can hinder their career advancement and skill development. The lack of senior female role models and mentors was noted as a significant barrier to women's professional growth (Greenfield & Naidoo, 2021).

7.6 Work – Life Balance

Balancing work responsibilities with personal obligations was cited as a key challenge for women in local government, impacting their ability to focus on skills development and career advancement. The lack of support structures and flexible working arrangements further exacerbate these challenges (Motlhabane & Tshabalala, 2018).

7.7 Inadequate Recognition and Rewards

Participants expressed concerns about the lack of recognition and reward systems that acknowledge women's contributions and achievements in local government. The absence of performance-based evaluations and promotions based on merit contribute to the skills and competency gap faced by women (Mbele & Sibiyi, 2020). The insights from the participants' perspectives provided in the focus group interview, along with the identified obstacles and challenges uncovered through the research and literature, emphasize the systemic issues that hinder women's advancement and professional development in municipalities. Addressing these barriers is crucial for promoting gender equality, empowering women in leadership roles, and creating a more inclusive and diverse workforce in local government settings.

SECTION 6: CONCLUSION

Despite an enabling legislative environment, municipalities have generally failed to effectively transform the workplace making it more inclusive for women. The Employment Equity Commission report (2020) concluded that “there is no will to affect (implement) transformation”. This is the first comprehensive study to assess the competency of women management and leadership in local government.

The primary objective of the research was to provide a research report on the findings of an assessment of skills audit on women in leadership and management positions in local government focussing on councillors and officials in municipalities.

The secondary objectives of the research were:

1. Determine skills and competencies of women who are currently in leadership positions within municipalities. **This was done in section 5.**
2. Conduct an analysis of current skills profile of women in leadership positions and determine the skills and competence gaps between the skills requirements and current skills sets. **This was done in section 5**
3. Identify and define skills, competencies and qualifications required to effectively deliver on the operational requirements of the occupied positions. **This was done in section 3**
4. Determine skills that are essential for the positions occupied by women in order to thrive in a fourth industrial revolution world of work. **This was done in section 5**
5. Determine critical and scarce skills for the women in local government sector. **This was done in section 3**
6. Make concise recommendations on skills audit process within municipalities based on international and regional best practices. **This was done in section 6**
7. Develop and recommend a training plan to address the identified skills gap. **This was done in section 6**

The research findings reveal a complex interplay of factors that contribute to the underrepresentation and underutilization of women's potential in leadership and management roles. These factors range from structural barriers and skill disparities to cultural and institutional biases that collectively hinder women's advancement and efficacy in decision-making positions. Notably, the lack of mentorship and networking

opportunities, combined with work-life balance challenges and inadequate recognition, underscores the systemic nature of these obstacles.

Embedded within these challenges, however, are opportunities for transformative change. The data and insights gathered not only highlight the gaps but also point towards actionable strategies that can be employed to dismantle these barriers. It is evident that targeted interventions in training and development, policy reform, and cultural change are crucial in creating an enabling environment for women leaders. Moreover, the qualitative interviews and focus groups conducted have added valuable perspectives to the understanding, underscoring the importance of listening to women in these discussions. These first-hand accounts reinforce the need for a concerted effort to address the obstacles to women's skills and competency development in municipal government.

The previous section lays a critical foundation for the recommendations that follow. By confronting the realities faced by women in leadership and management positions, policy makers are in a much better position to advocate for and implement meaningful changes. The path forward requires a commitment to equity, inclusion, and empowerment, ensuring that women are not only present in places where decisions are being made but are also equipped and supported to lead effectively. The journey towards gender equality in local government leadership is not only about rectifying imbalances but also about harnessing the full spectrum of talent and perspectives for the betterment of our municipalities and communities.

This report has provided a synthesis of the results obtained from the skills audit study pertaining to women occupying leadership and management roles in local government, with a specific emphasis on municipal councillors and officials. The present research investigation was enabled through the application of empowerment theory, which was utilised to evaluate the skills and competencies of women in local government and to identify pre-existing barriers that impede the subsequent empowerment of women in local government. In light of this, the study's justification was founded upon the constructive attributes and determinants that women contribute to fostering increased political determination for sound governance. As a result, the objective of the study was to assess the competencies of women in management and leadership positions and to identify the obstacles that continue to exist as a result of the power dynamic between men and women. The data that was compiled throughout this study has substantiated the notion that the representation of women continues to be a fundamental aspect of municipal governance in South Africa.

The results presented demonstrate that South Africa has fulfilled its responsibilities to enhance the status and quality of life for women, as stipulated in the BPFA of 1995. South Africa has set the following five areas of concern as top priorities: Enhancing the status and circumstances of female children; women and poverty; women and education; women and economic empowerment; women and decision-making; and women and economic empowerment. Since then, the number of women in municipal government has experienced periods of growth and periods of decline; during the Zuma Administration, the number of women in municipal government declined significantly. As a result, the representation of women councillors at the municipal decision-making level continues to be disproportionately low when compared to that of men. This suggests that political decision-making at the municipal level is predominantly controlled by men.

For most of the competency categories the majority of women councillors fall in the bands of proficient and advanced skills. Competency acquisition should therefore focus to move women councillors from the proficient category to the advanced category. The advanced category for most skills never exceeds 40%. This needs to improve. Training should also focus on improving the skills of the beginner and developing groups, to move them to the proficient band.

There is a serious skills deficit for both women councillors and managers around legal skills and risk management. Knowledge of the law is a specialization area and will have to be taught by facilitators who are experts in laws that have a bearing on local government. Since law and policy making are part of good governance this capacity building should be taken seriously and staggered for managers and councillors.

Far more attention should be paid to the institutional culture of local governments and how it may disempower women. This cannot be dealt with through training only, but needs a different approach as will be indicated in the recommendations.

The continued segregation of women's issues creates a disconnect between their requirements and the fact that, despite comprising the majority of the population, women face the greatest number of obstacles pertaining to skill and ability competencies in the workplace. Furthermore, apartheid-reinforced institutional processes and systems continue to persist, accompanied by weak policy: patriarchal and traditionalist structures continue to dominate organisations; their policies are supposedly applied in an unbiased manner, while politicians profit from the consolidation of authority at the highest levels (Bannister, 2003). Patriarchal systems impede the expression of women's viewpoints

regarding matters pertaining to women. This would indicate that without the necessary political will to effect change, efforts to promote women to leadership positions in municipal government structures, mainstream gender issues, and provide training for women leaders will continue to be ineffective.

The implementation recommendations section will propose an approach to ensure the vibrant and dynamic governance of South African municipalities is addressed that at the same time also speak to the institutional cultural context of organisations.

SECTION 7: IMPLEMENTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the triangulation of the respective data sets and the findings of the survey and in line with the objectives of the research project, two recommendations are presented:

1. Municipal research onboarding
2. Comprehensive Stakeholder-supported women's development program inclusive of a multi-pronged HRD intervention.

1. MUNICIPAL RESEARCH ONBOARDING

An enormous amount of time and effort was spent (not invested) in persuading the municipalities to participate in an LGSETA program. It is thus recommended that the LGSETA develop a municipal research onboarding protocol in consultation with provincial LGSETA managers, skills development facilitators, SALGA and CoGTA within the next six months in order to streamline research in the local government sector. This point was already raised in earlier research reports to the LGSETA but has not been actioned.

2. COMPREHENSIVE STAKEHOLDERS SUPPORTED WOMEN'S PROGRAM

Noting the broader context of women in leadership and management positions in local government and the legislative framework (Municipal Staff Regulations, the Employment Equity Act and the Skills Development Act) a 3-year implementation plan is advanced that is led by the local municipality in concert with key stakeholders such as the Local Government Sector Education and Training Authority (LGSETA), the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (CoGTA), and the South African Local Government Association (SALGA).

2.1 Multiyear Implementation Plan

Table 6: 3-Year implementation plan

Year	Recommendation	Stakeholders
Year 1	Analysis of the 2024 WSP and EE report to identify specific barriers and training needs for women in the local government sector.	LGSETA CoGTA
	Through the DDM initiate mentorship and networking programs to initiate pilot leadership capacity building training programs in selected municipalities.	LGSETA SALGA
Year 2	Expand compulsory leadership training programs to additional municipalities, incorporating feedback from the pilot phase.	CoGTA SALGA
	Begin developing gender-sensitive policies with input from women in leadership positions.	
	Implement gender-sensitive policies in pilot municipalities. Evaluate the impact of mentorship and networking programs, adjusting, as necessary.	SALGA LGSETA
Year 3	Scale up the implementation of gender-sensitive policies across all municipalities.	CoGTA LGSETA
	Continue to expand leadership training programs, focusing on sustainability and long-term impact.	SALGA
	Conduct a comprehensive evaluation of all initiatives implemented over the 3-year period. Develop a report outlining successes, challenges, and recommendations for future efforts to support women in leadership within local government.	CoGTA LGSETA SALGA

2.2 Multiyear Capacity Building Plan

Based on the synthesis of challenges identified in the document and the broader context of women in leadership and management positions in local government, the following detailed roles and responsibilities for key stakeholders such as the Local Government Sector Education and Training Authority (LGSETA), the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (CoGTA), and the South African Local Government Association (SALGA) are outlined within a 3-year implementation plan.

Year	Training Plan	Stakeholder Responsibility	Stakeholder
Year 1	Foundation and Assessment	Conducting a comprehensive needs assessment to identify specific barriers and training needs for women in local government. This includes gathering data on current competencies, leadership gaps, and the aspirations of women in local government positions.	SALGA COGTA LGSETA
		Plays a supportive role in facilitating access to municipalities and ensuring that the needs assessment is comprehensive and inclusive of various municipal contexts.	SALGA COGTA LGSETA
		To begin the development of mentorship and networking programs, leveraging its network to identify potential mentors and establish platforms for networking. SALGA will work in close collaboration with LGSETA to ensure alignment with the identified training needs.	SALGA COGTA LGSETA
Year 2	Program Development and Initial Implementation	Pilot leadership training programs in selected municipalities, based on the needs assessment conducted in Year 1. LGSETA will also oversee the mentorship programs, ensuring they	LGSETA

Year	Training Plan	Stakeholder Responsibility	Stakeholder
		are effectively supporting women's professional development.	
		Development of gender sensitive policies with input from women in leadership positions.	CoGTA
		To implement gender-sensitive policies in pilot municipalities, monitoring their adoption and effectiveness. SALGA will also evaluate the impact of mentorship and networking programs, providing feedback to LGSETA for adjustments.	SALGA
Year 3	Expansion, Evaluation, and Sustainability	Continue to expand leadership training programs, focusing on sustainability and long-term impact. LGSETA will also conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the training and mentorship initiatives, assessing their effectiveness in closing the leadership gap for women in local government.	LGSETA
		Takes a leading role in scaling up the implementation of gender-sensitive policies across all municipalities, ensuring that these policies become ingrained in municipal operations and culture.	CoGTA
		Responsible for synthesizing the learnings and outcomes from the initiatives into a comprehensive report. This report will outline successes, challenges, and recommendations for future efforts to support women in leadership within local government. SALGA will also play a critical role in	SALGA

Year	Training Plan	Stakeholder Responsibility	Stakeholder
		advocating for continued support and funding for these initiatives	

This 3-year implementation plan emphasizes the distinct yet complementary roles of LGSETA, CoGTA, and SALGA which allows for checks and balances. It requires strong collaboration among these stakeholders to create an enabling environment that supports and empowers women in leadership and management positions in local government. Through concerted efforts, the plan aims to address the structural barriers, enhance professional development opportunities for women, and promote gender-sensitive policies within South African municipalities.

2.3 Overarching Implementation Recommendations

2.3.1. Establishment of National Coaching, Mentorship and Networking Programs:

Implement programs facilitated by LGSETA to provide mentorship and networking opportunities for women in local government. These programs should aim to connect women with established leaders and peers to foster support systems and professional development.

2.3.2 Leadership Training Programs: CoGTA, LGSETA, SALGA and NSG, should further implement the leadership training programs specifically designed for women in partnership with academic and other private institutions. These programs should focus on building leadership skills, assertiveness, and confidence while addressing the unique challenges faced by women in leadership.

2.3.3 Promotion of Gender-Sensitive Policies: SALGA should advocate for and assist in the development of gender-sensitive policies within municipalities. These policies should aim to eliminate structural barriers, promote equal opportunities, and address gender biases in the workplace.

2.3.4 Critical and Scarce Skills List per municipality: A comprehensive scarce and critical skills list for women in local government should be developed through the WSP process and added to the LGSETA Sector Skills Plan.

2.3.5 Skills Audit: The Municipal Staff Regulations calls for a process of self-assessment as well as an assessment by the manager of the employee that lead

to personal development plans. A national measuring tool to is proposed to align implementation and ensure better governance.

2.3.6 HRD Governance: Ensure mechanisms are in place for the effective and efficient measurement of HRD management.

2.3.7 Mindshift/Culture shift program: Based upon what is known about women in local government across the globe, a mind/culture shift is needed in order for women to feel valued, respected and appreciated in the workplace. Women's skills are of no use if these contributions are met with resistance from colleagues.

- Conduct local studies focused on the environment in which women in the local government sector are employed. This must include data from both women and men
- Facilitate local discussions between women and men on the way they each perceive relations in the workplace with the aim of identifying, preventing and/or resolving potential conflicts
- Create a district wide system to monitor the (meaningful) implementation of existing policies related to women's rights and equity
- Consider the development of a coaching and/or mentoring programme for women in which senior councillors/staff provide support for junior councillors/staff
- Prioritise consistent engagement with and support for women councillors/staff
- Discuss the establishment of a women's caucus in each municipality and support its establishment where required
- Review the roles of SALGA, LGSETA, NSG and COGTA in serving as role models for women's rights and empowerment

3. RESEARCH LIMITATIONS

Typical of any research project, this study had certain limitations. The first was an impossibly tight timeframe over the extended summer holiday period to complete the research project as required. This timeframe did not take into consideration that municipal activities normally scale down significantly over the festive period, starting normally from 1 December to the middle of January when the schools open again, with many potential respondents away on holiday during this period.

The second constraint was a significant non-responsiveness of municipalities and their individual respondents despite direct support interventions by the LGSETA and the provincial managers. Inordinate volumes of time and effort were spent (not invested) in persuading municipalities to participate in this LGSETA research program. It was only partially successful and the research team had to adopt contingency strategies to substitute numerous municipalities as a result of non-responses from the originally targeted institutions. This negative experience confirms the dismal condition that local government finds itself in across the country, and the lack of skills and commitment from senior local government practitioners that aggravates the serious under-performance of these institutions in terms of their statutory local governance mandates. It is recommended that research schedules in future take this factor explicitly into account in order to maximise the quality of research results

As also indicated in the introduction to this report, no separate comparative audit of the skills and competencies levels of male councillors and officials are available yet, to compare that situation with those of women as has been identified in this report. This should be done in a follow-up phase of this research project, in order not to perpetuate current criticism of a discriminatory approach towards male and female empowerment in local government.

The research report concludes by reminding the readers of the wisdom of Dr Mogale Sebopetsa (2024nd) who asserts that **evidence-based research allows society to solve problems of the future.**

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APPENDIX A – SECTION A: PROFESSIONAL/FUNCTIONAL COMPETENCIES

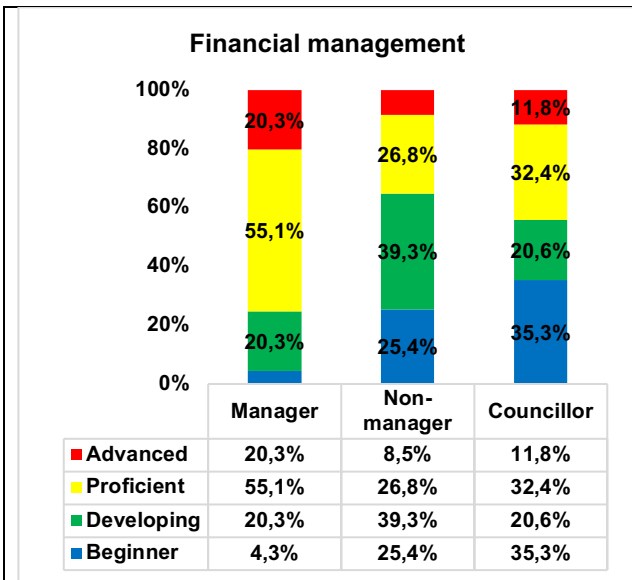


Figure 5: Financial management

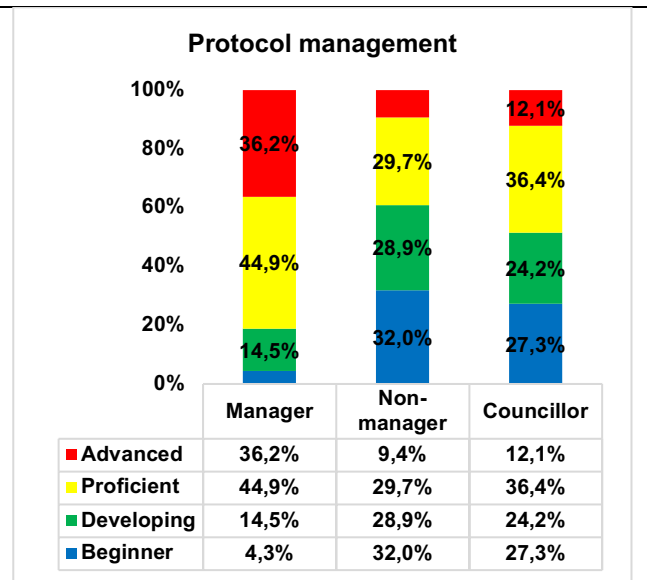


Figure 6: Protocol management

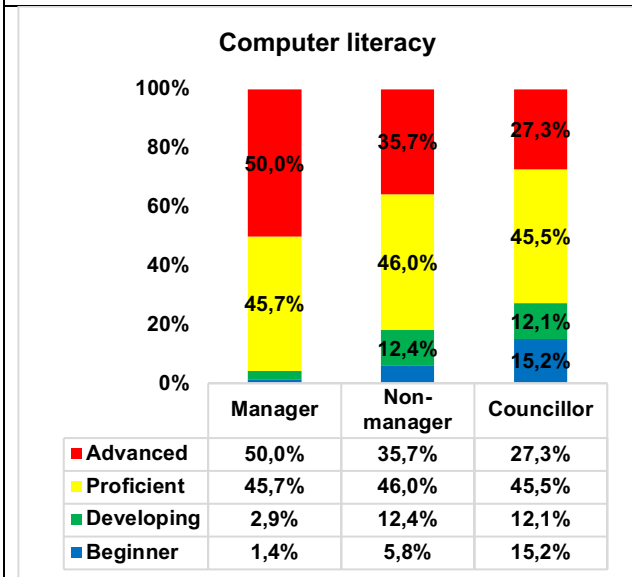


Figure 7: Computer literacy

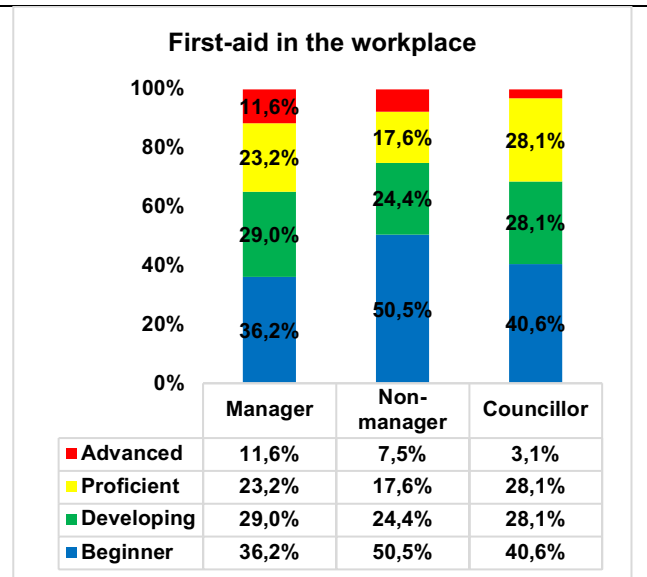


Figure 8: First-aid in the workplace

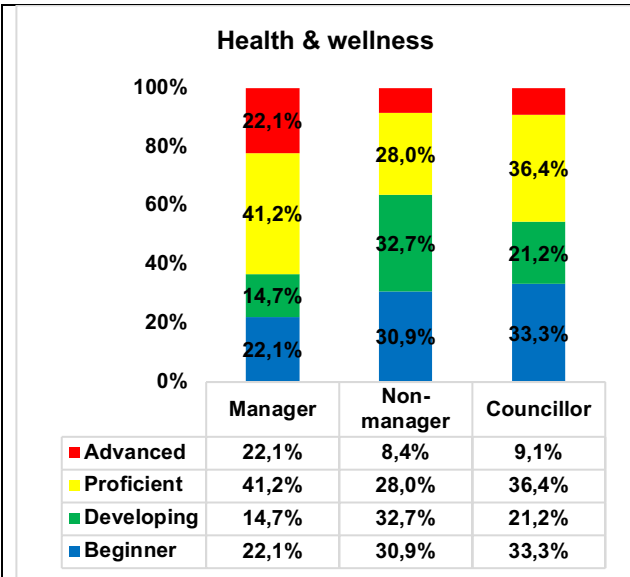


Figure 9: Health and wellness

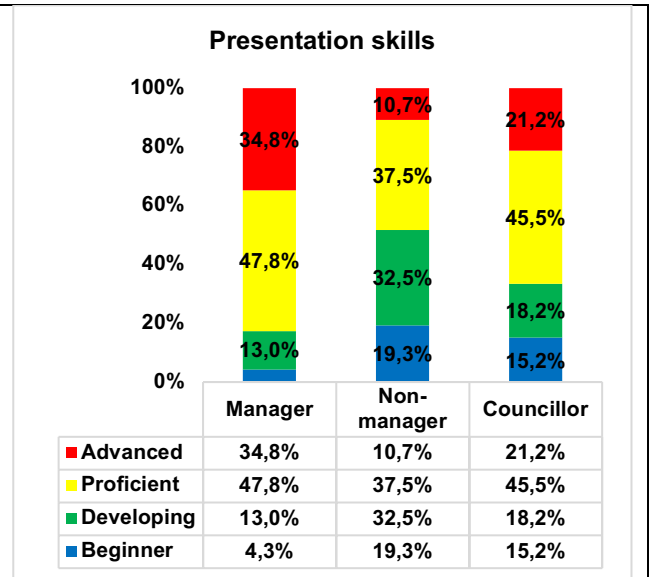


Figure 10: Presentation skills

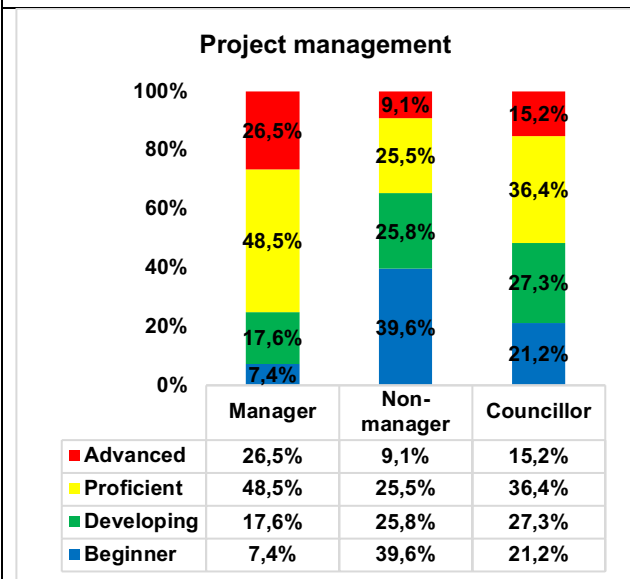


Figure 11: Project management

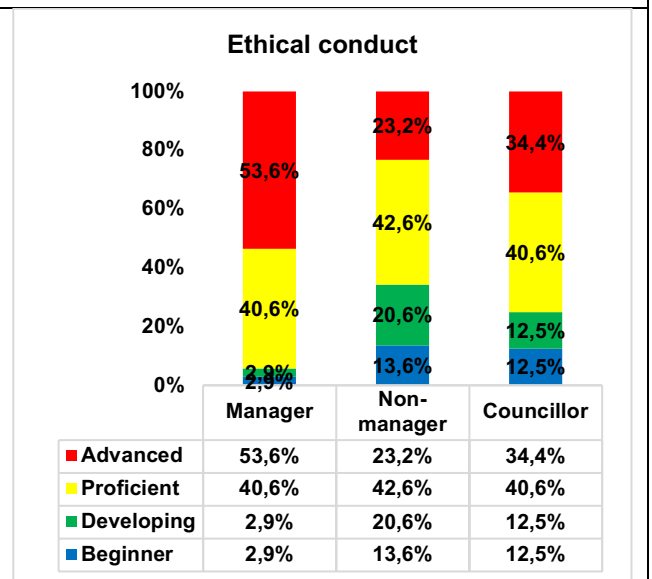


Figure 12: Ethical conduct

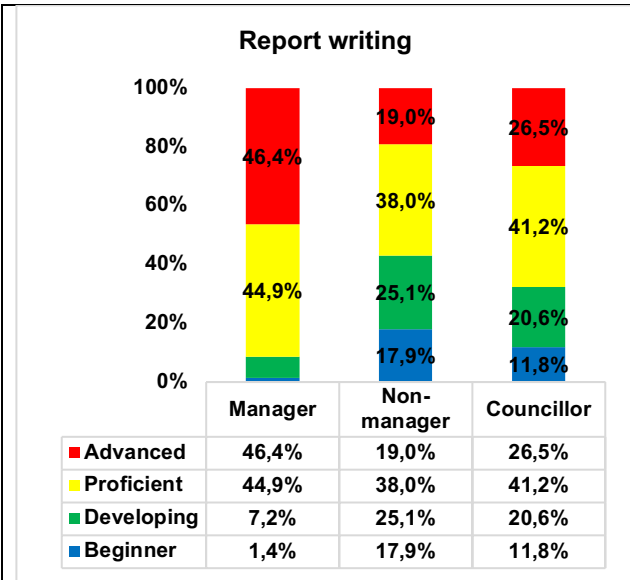


Figure 13: Report writing

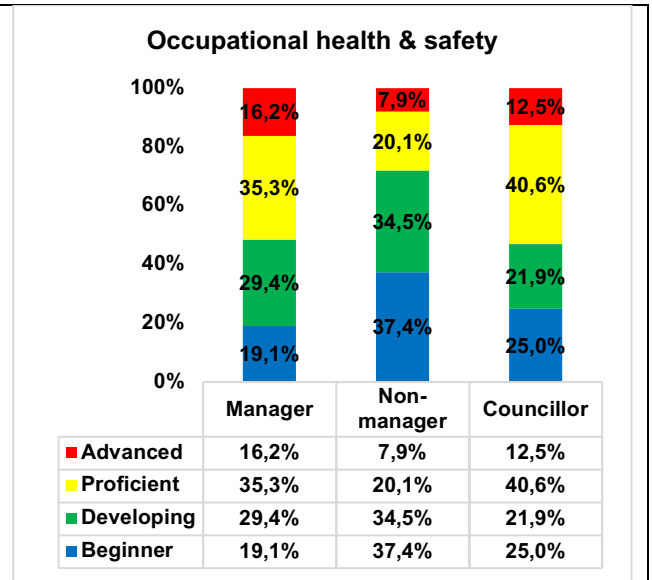


Figure 14: Occupational health & safety

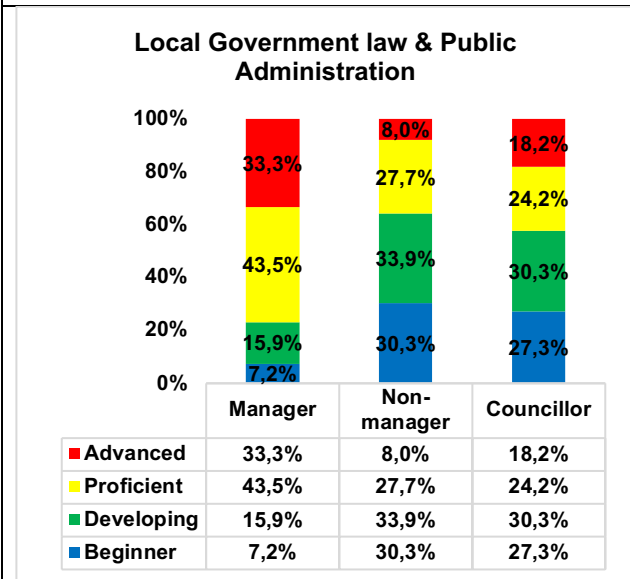


Figure 15: Local government law & public administration

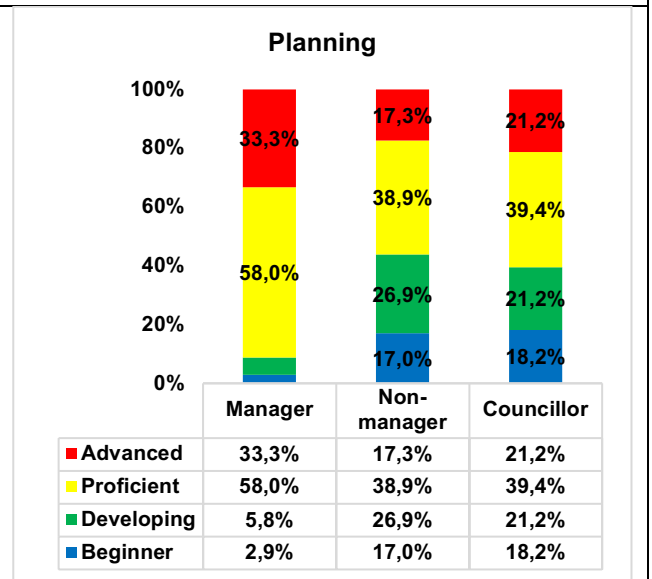


Figure 16: Planning

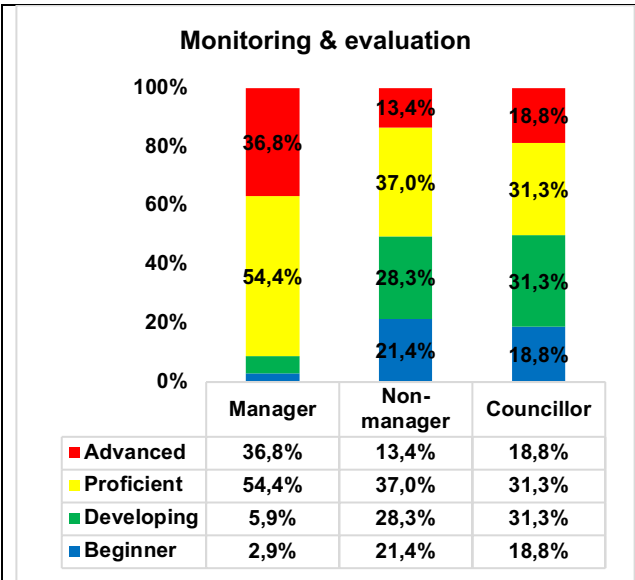


Figure 17: Monitoring & evaluation

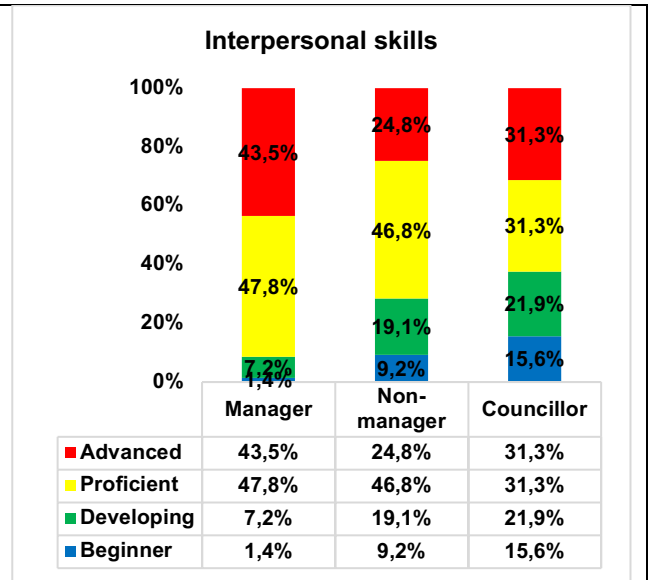


Figure 18: Interpersonal skills

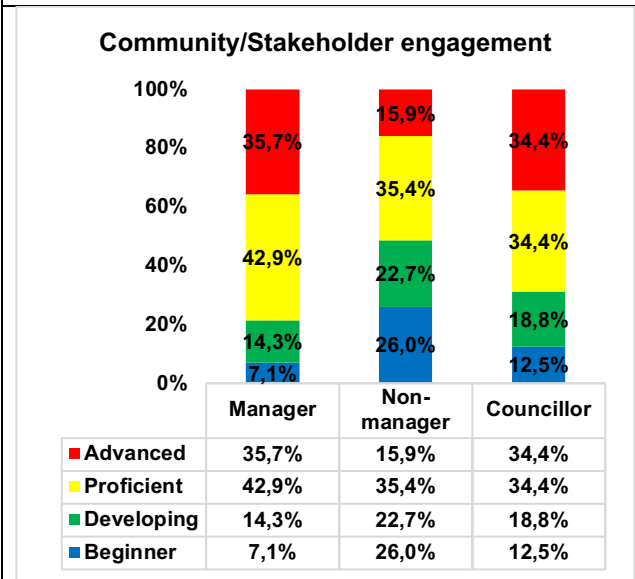


Figure 19: Community/stakeholder engagement

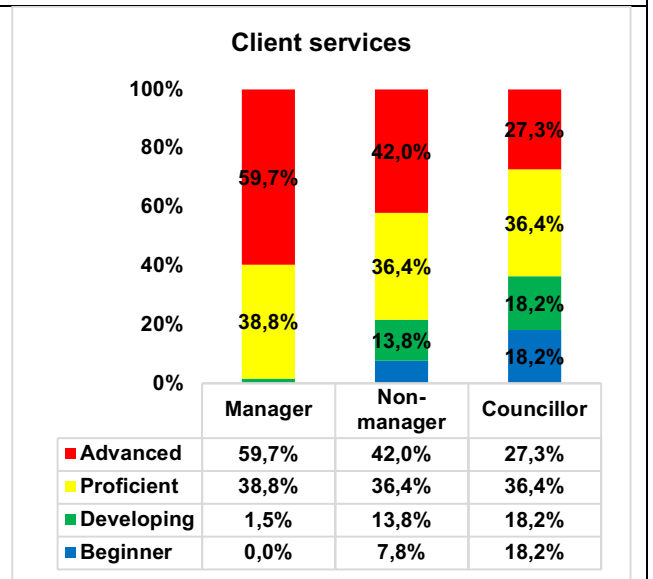


Figure 20: Client services

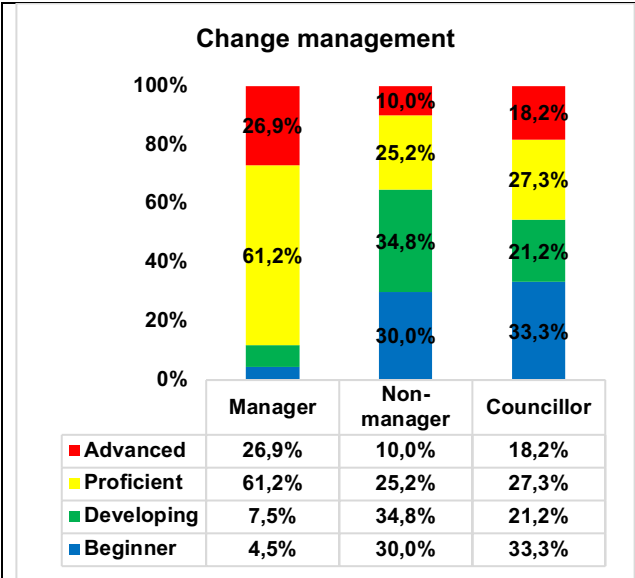


Figure 21: Change management

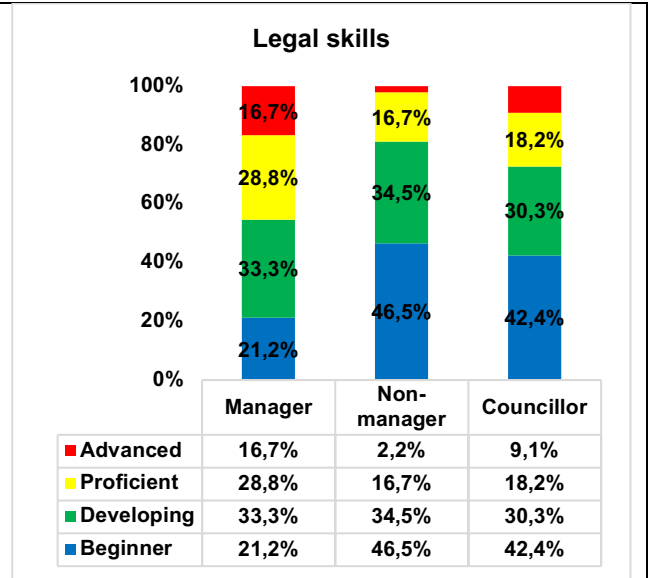


Figure 22: Legal skills

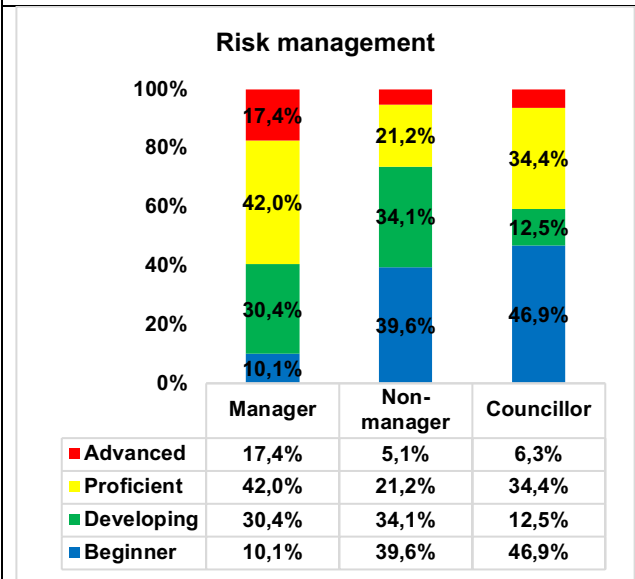


Figure 23: Risk management

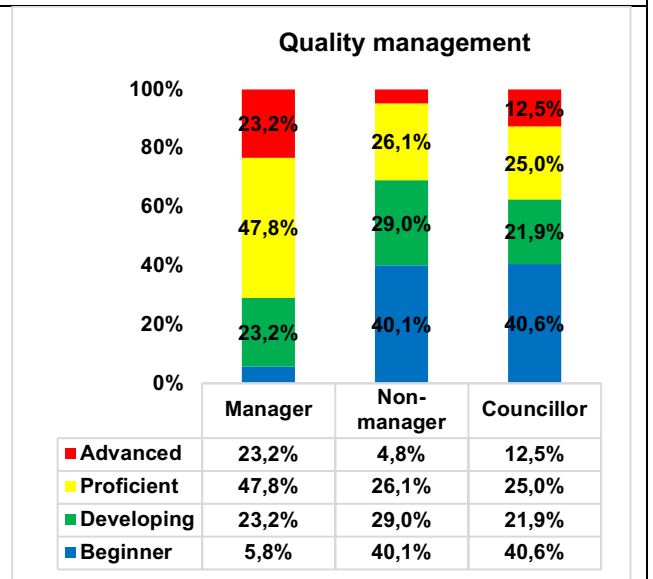


Figure 24: Quality management

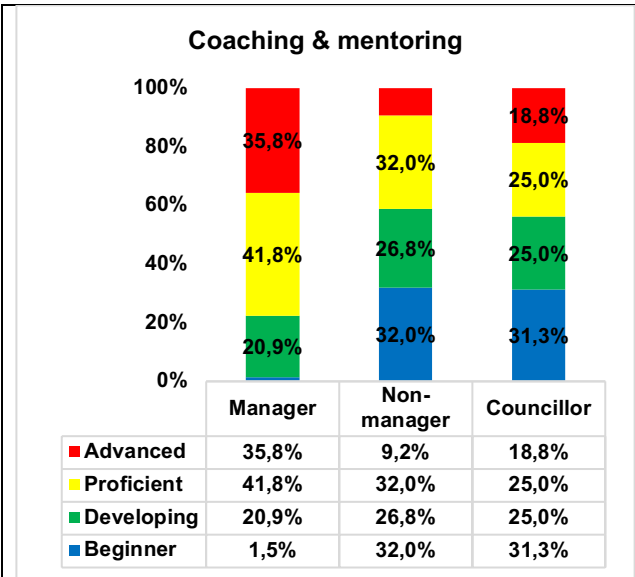


Figure 25: Coaching & mentoring

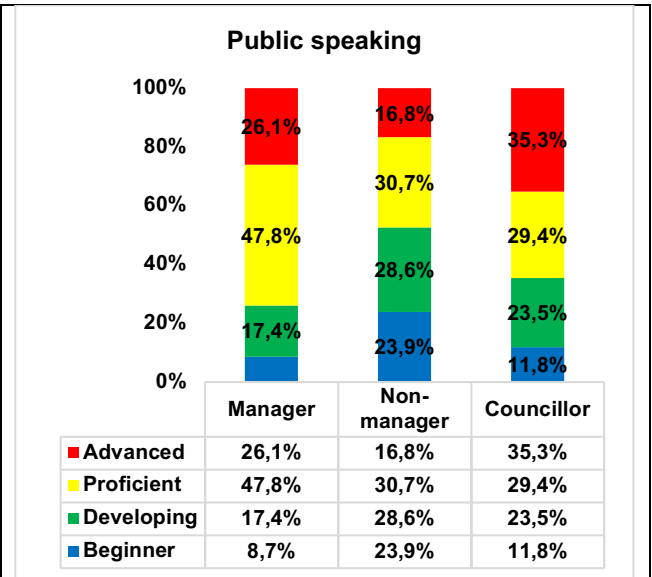


Figure 26: Public speaking

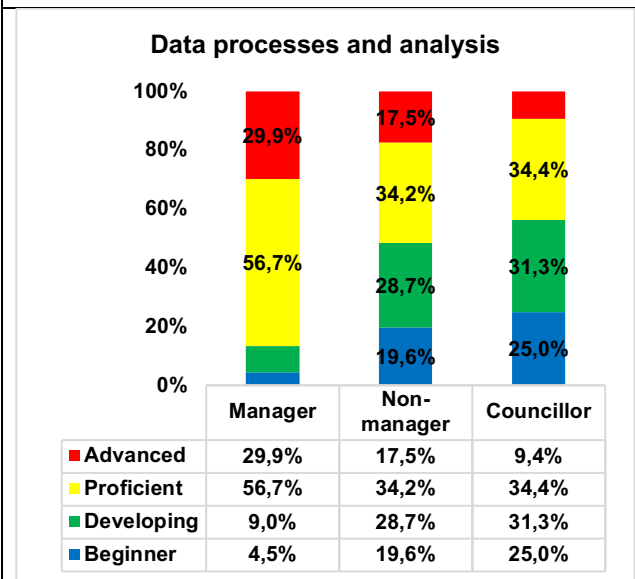


Figure 27: Data processes & analysis

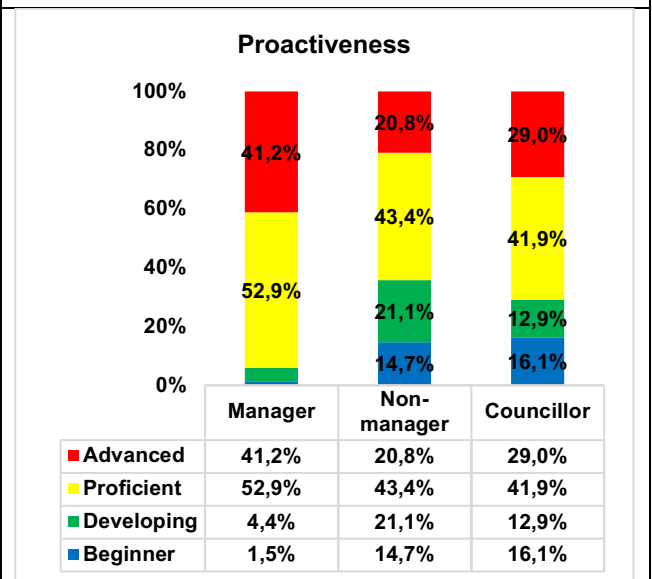


Figure 28: Proactiveness

APPENDIX B – SECTION B: PERSONAL COMPETENCIES

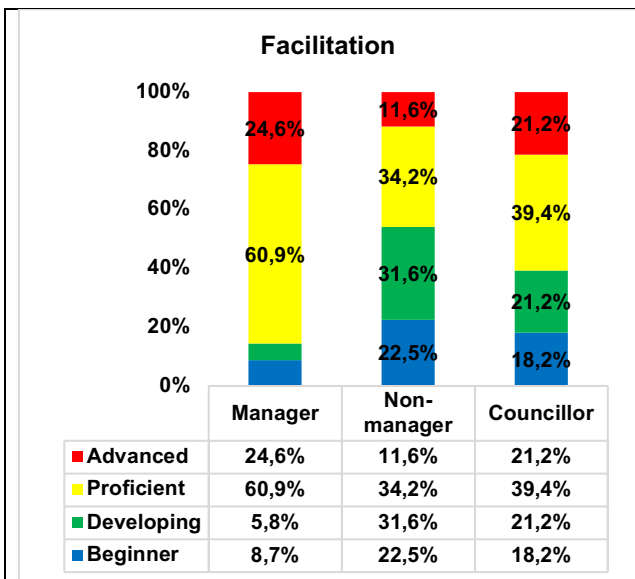


Figure 29: Facilitation

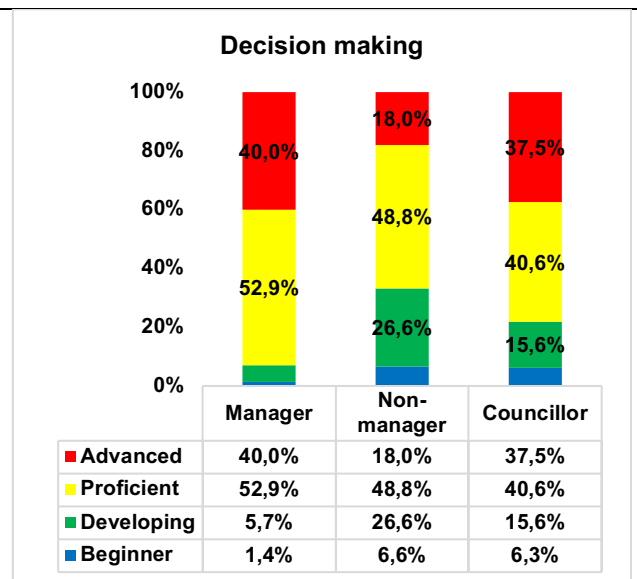


Figure 30: Decision making

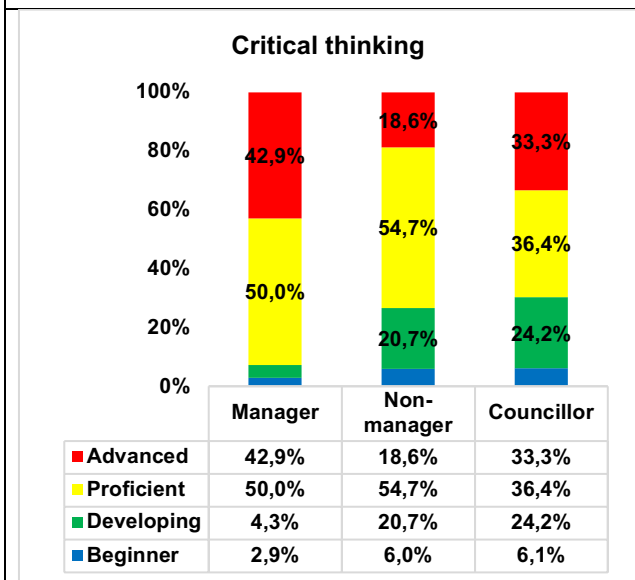


Figure 31: Critical thinking

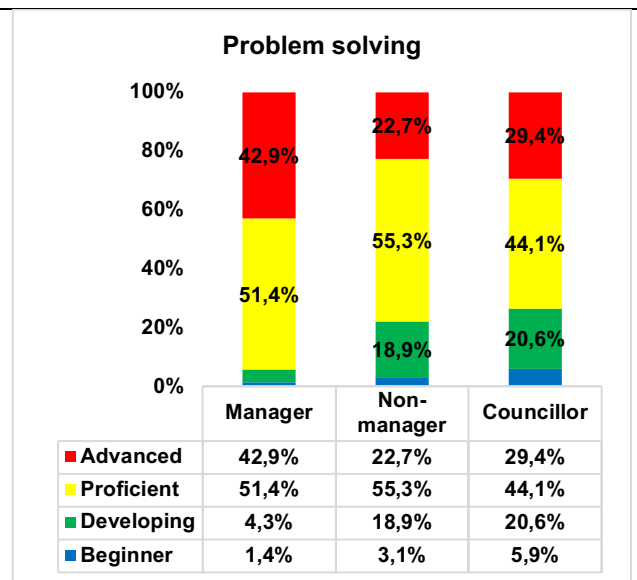


Figure 32: Problem solving

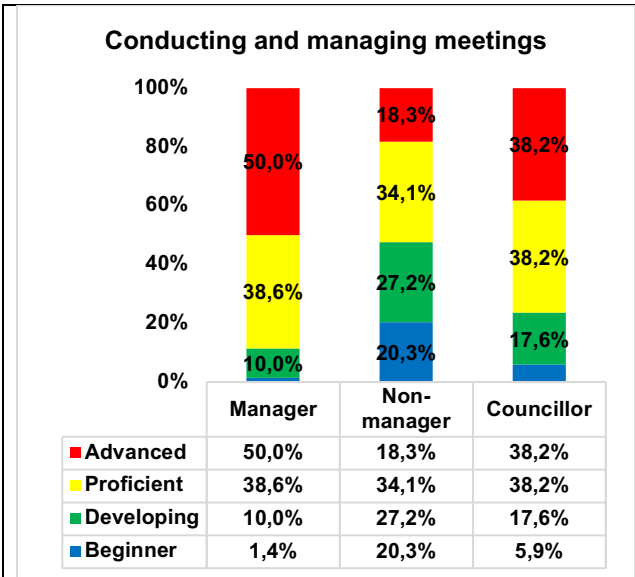


Figure 33: Conducting & managing meetings

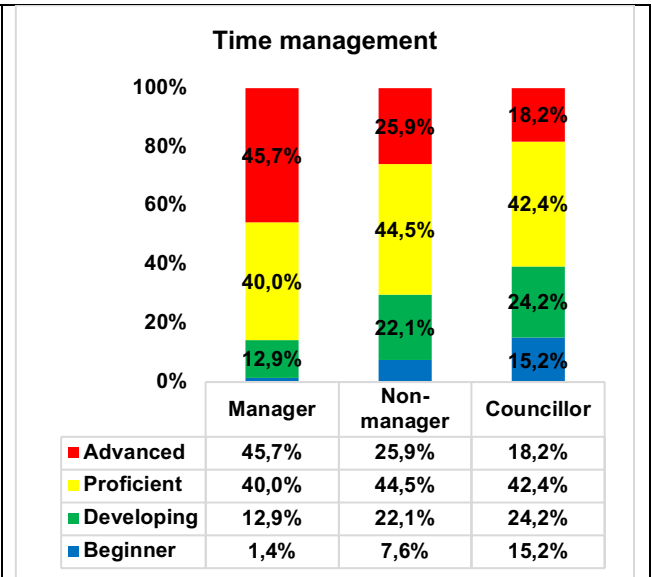


Figure 34: Time management

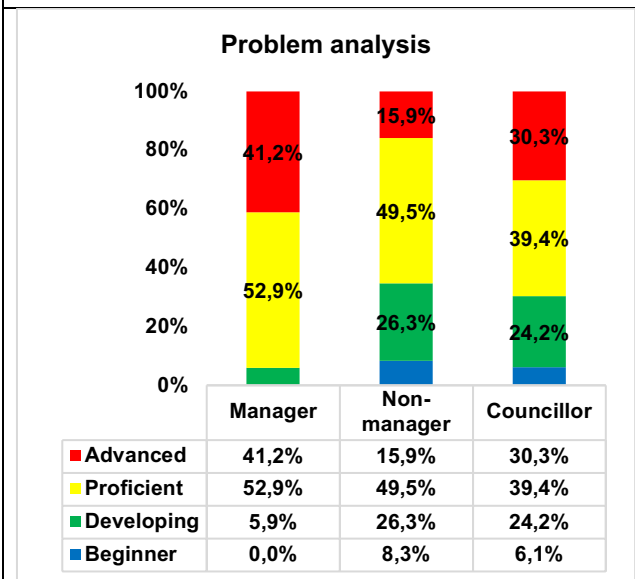


Figure 35: Problem analysis

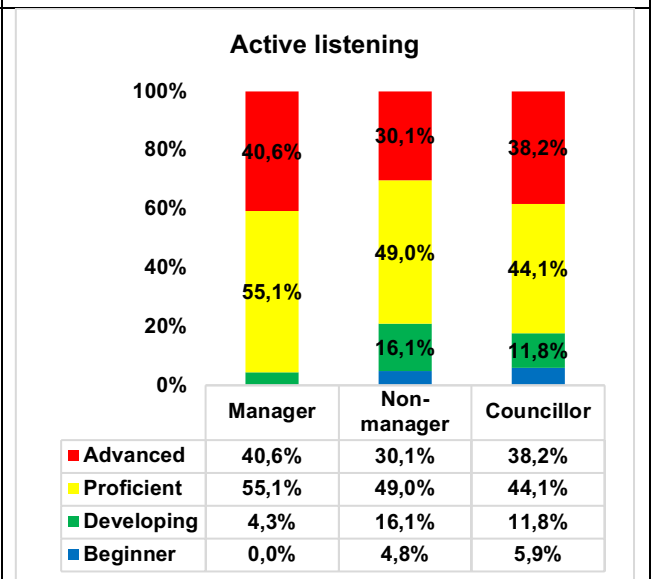


Figure 36: Active listening

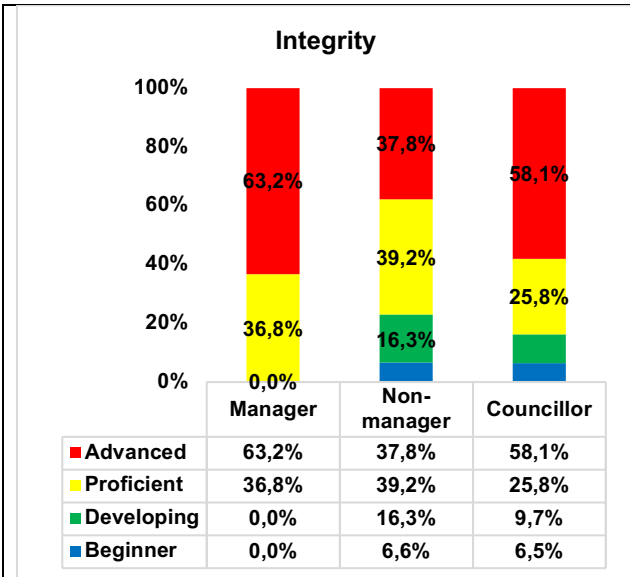


Figure 37: Integrity

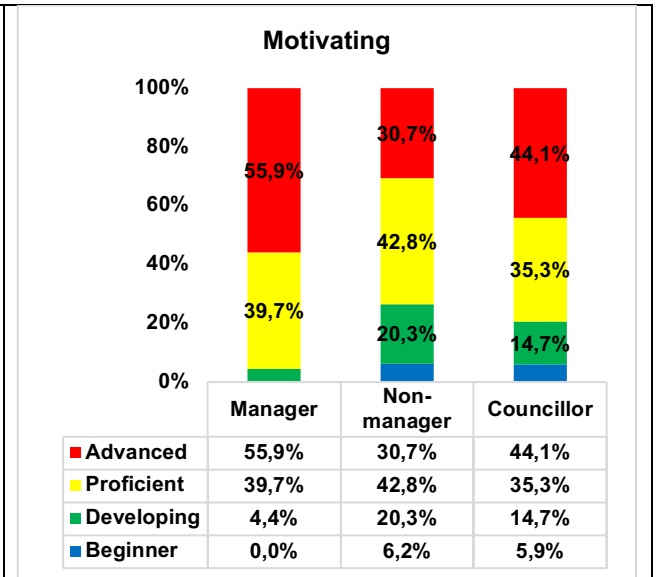


Figure 38: Motivating

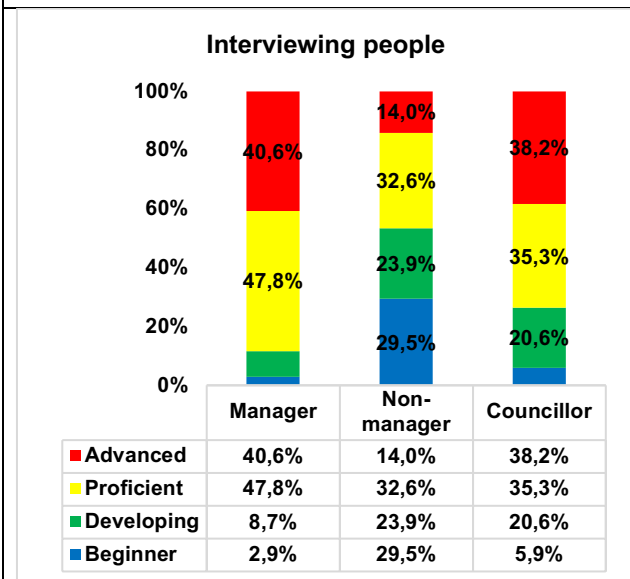


Figure 39: Interviewing people

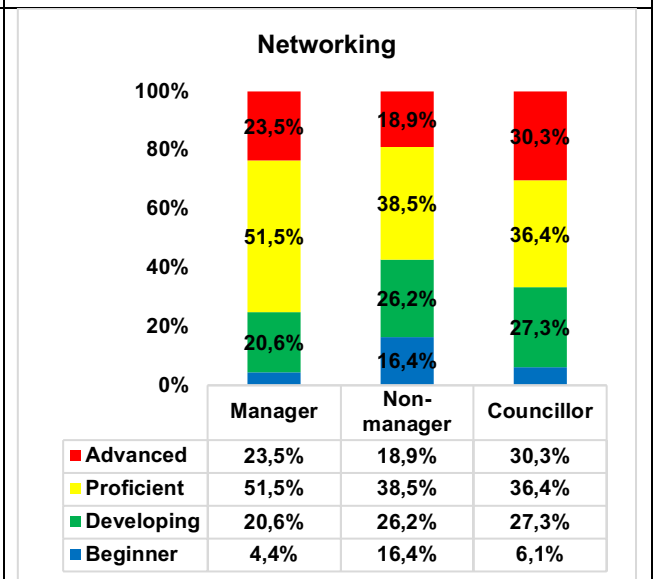


Figure 40: Networking

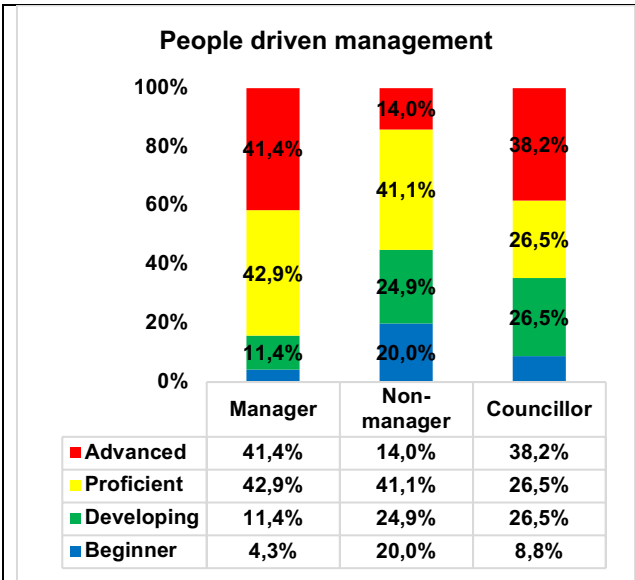


Figure 41: People driven management

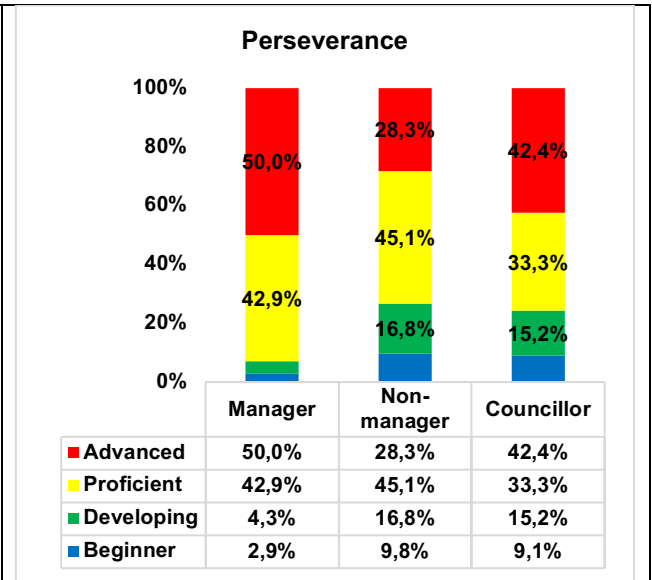


Figure 42: Perseverance

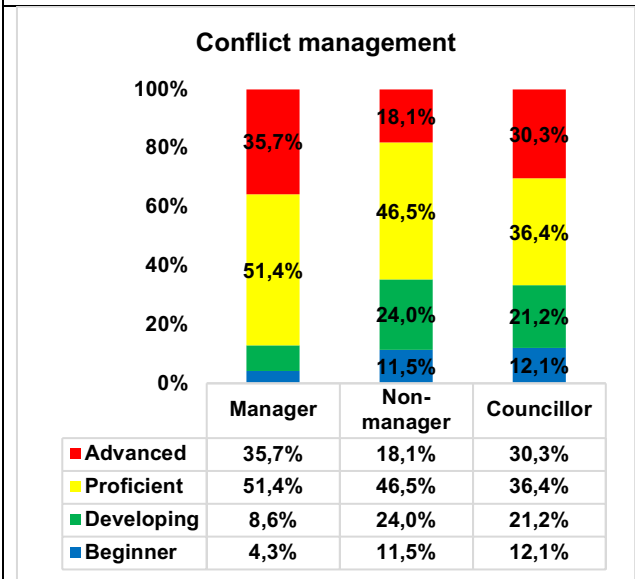


Figure 43: Conflict management

APPENDIX C – SECTION C: MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES

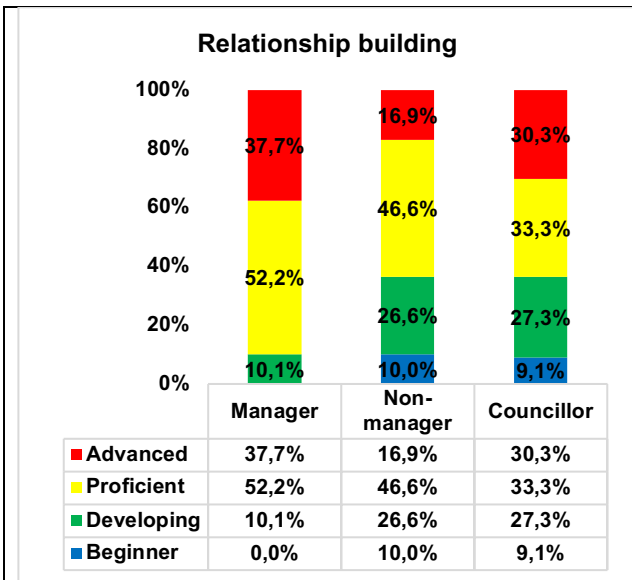


Figure 44: Relationship building

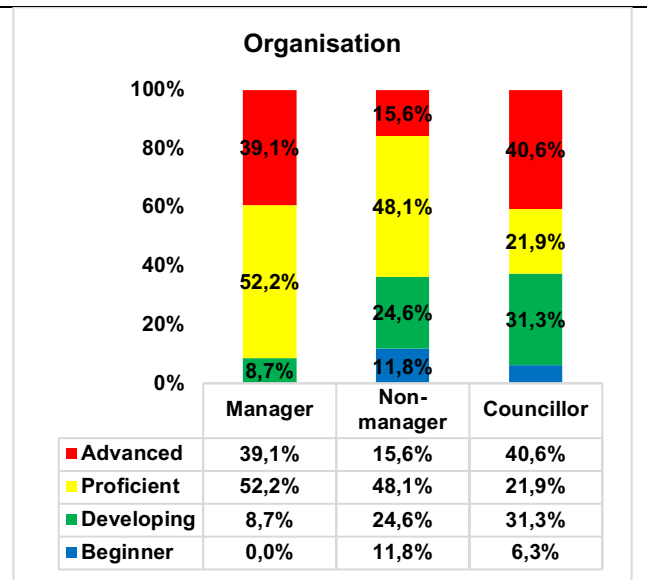


Figure 45: Organisation

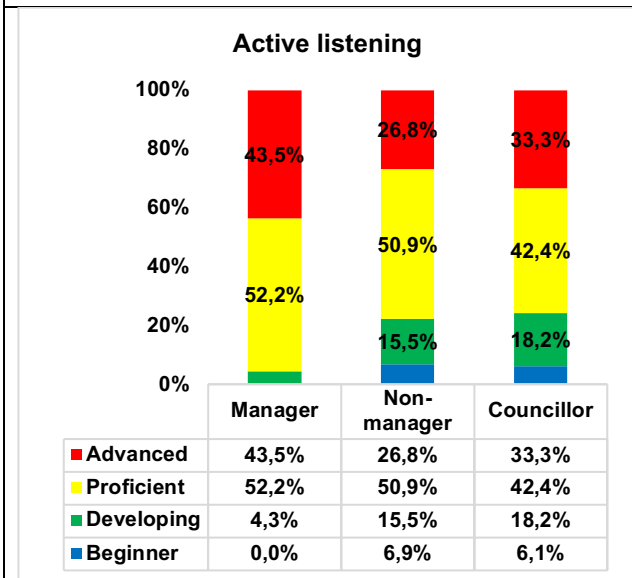


Figure 46: Active listening

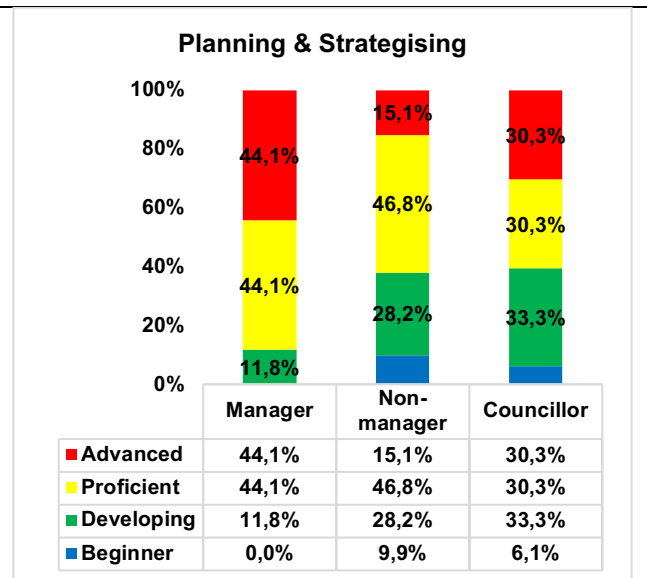


Figure 47: Planning & strategising

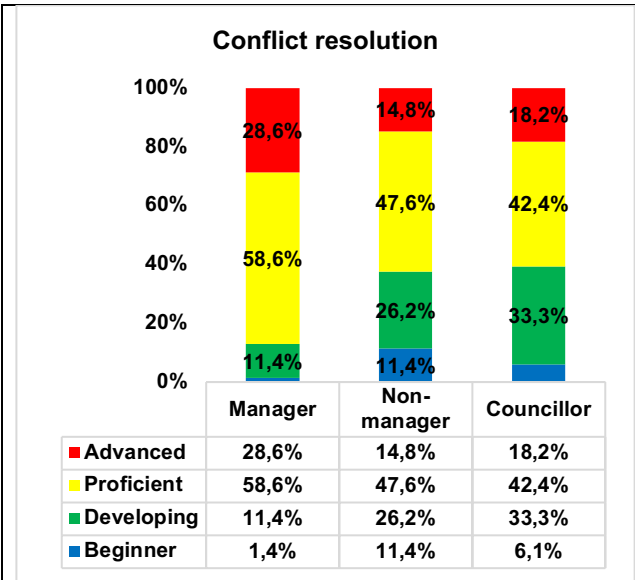


Figure 48: Conflict resolution

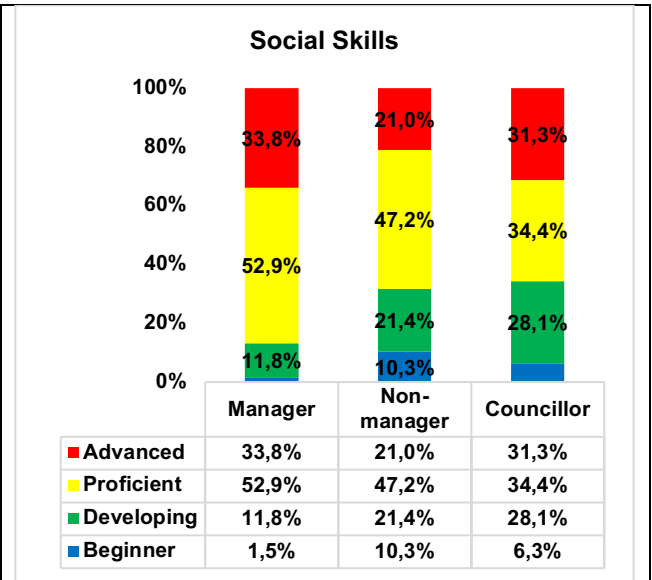


Figure 49: Social skills

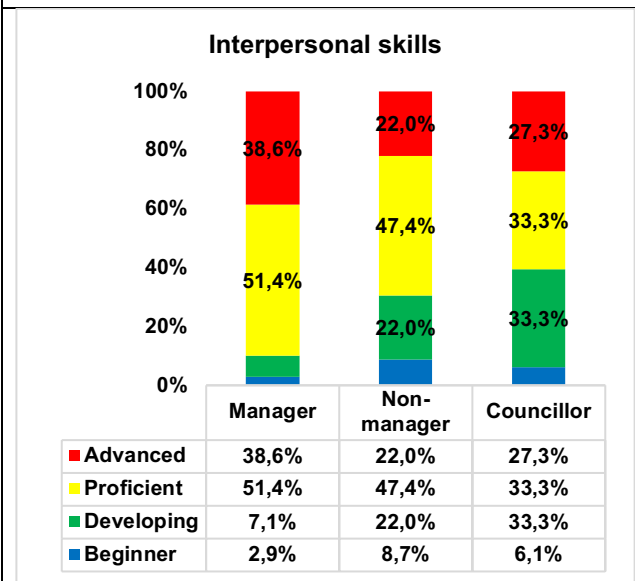


Figure 50: Interpersonal skills

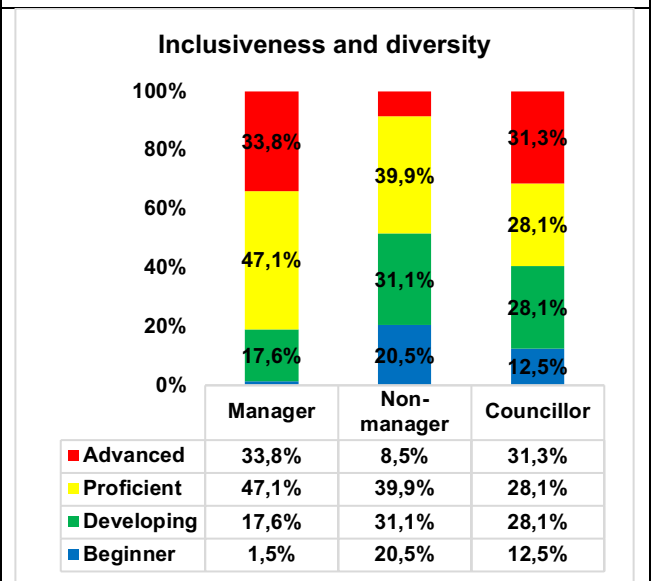


Figure 51: Inclusiveness & diversity

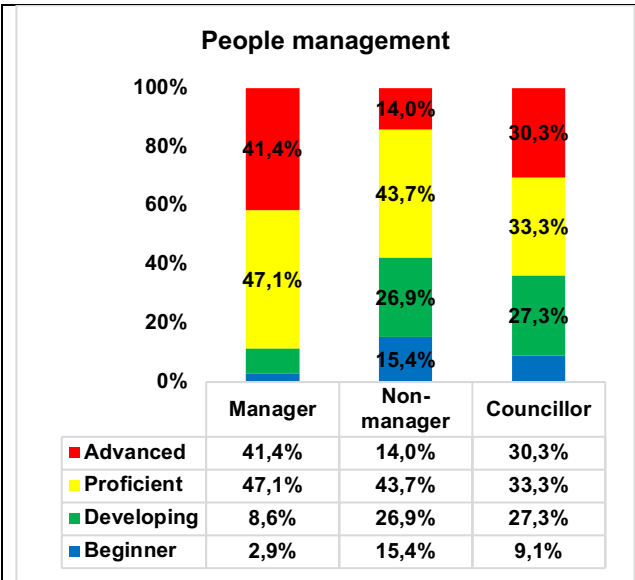


Figure 52: People management

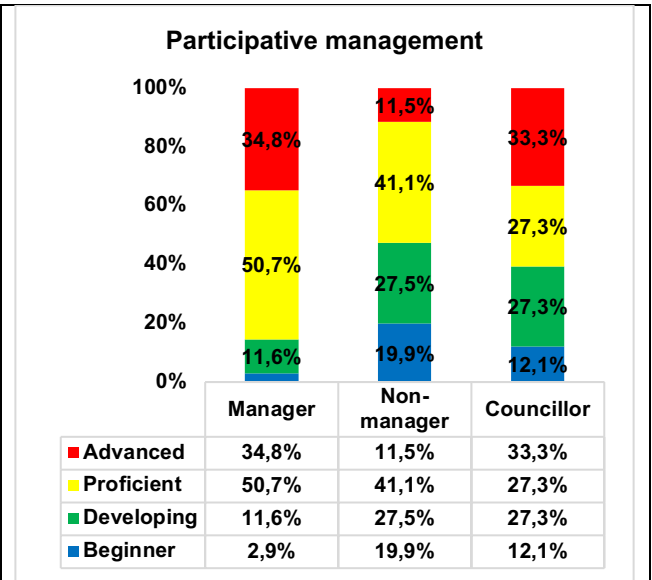


Figure 53: Participative management

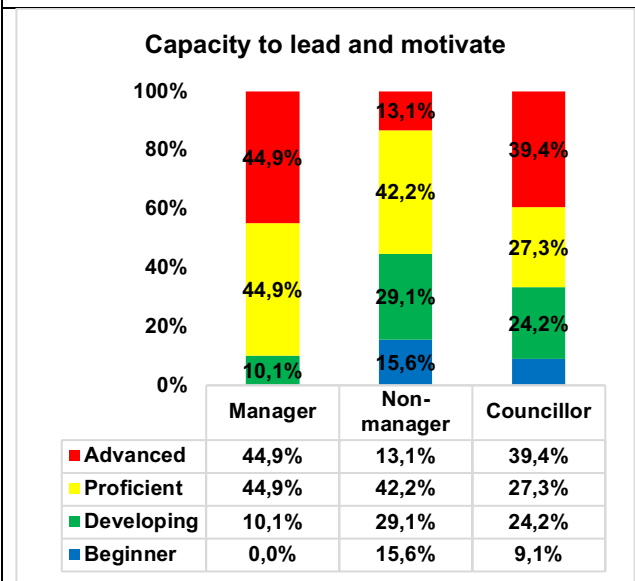


Figure 54: Capacity to lead & motivate

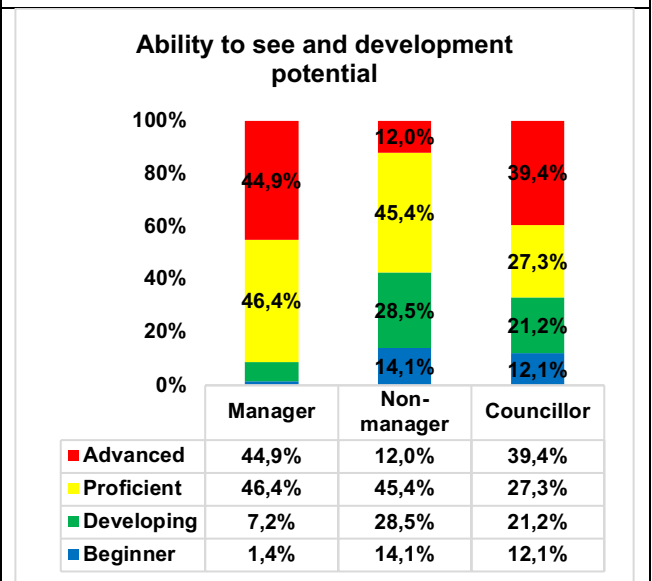


Figure 55: Ability to see & development potential

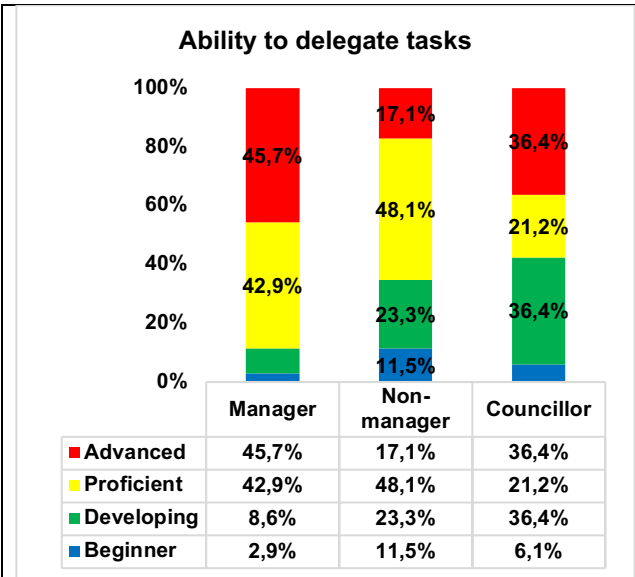


Figure 56: Ability to delegate tasks

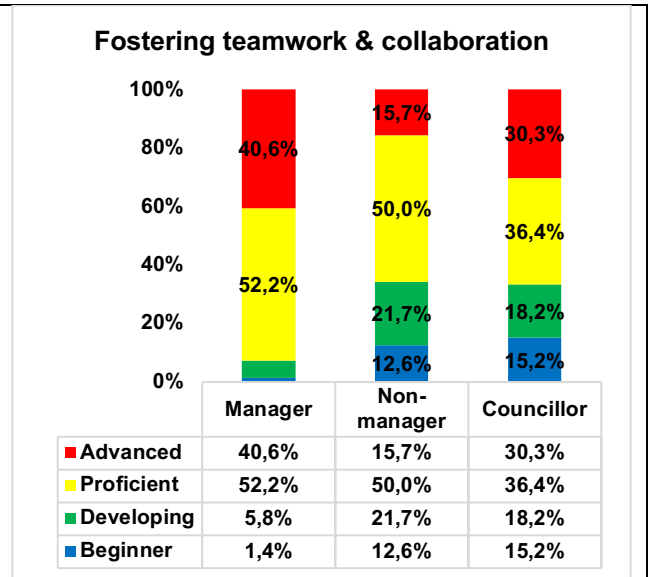


Figure 57: Fostering teamwork & collaboration

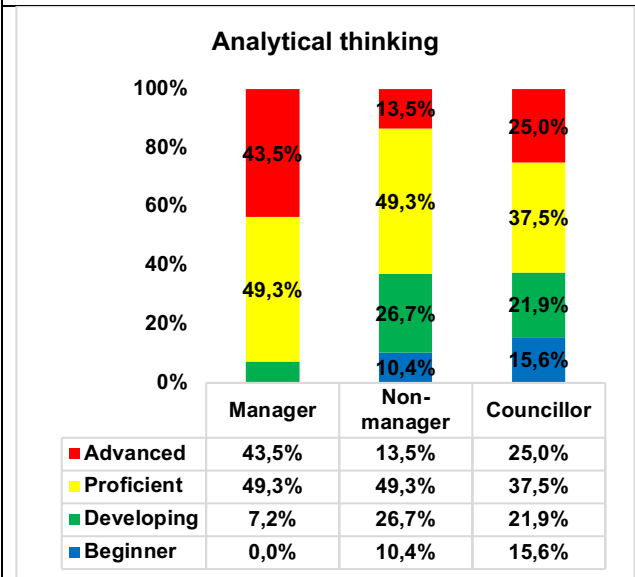


Figure 58: Analytical thinking

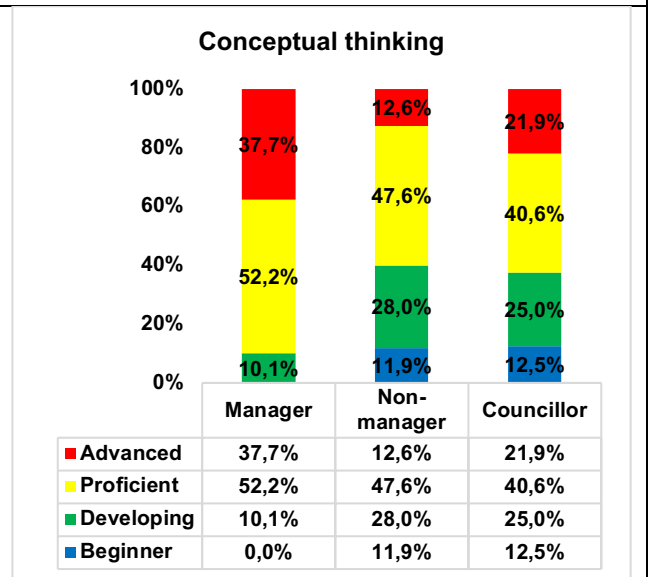


Figure 59: Conceptual thinking

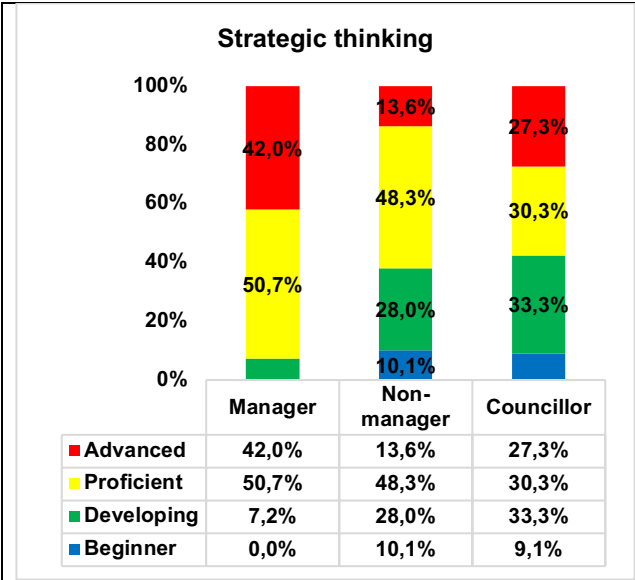


Figure 60: Strategic thinking

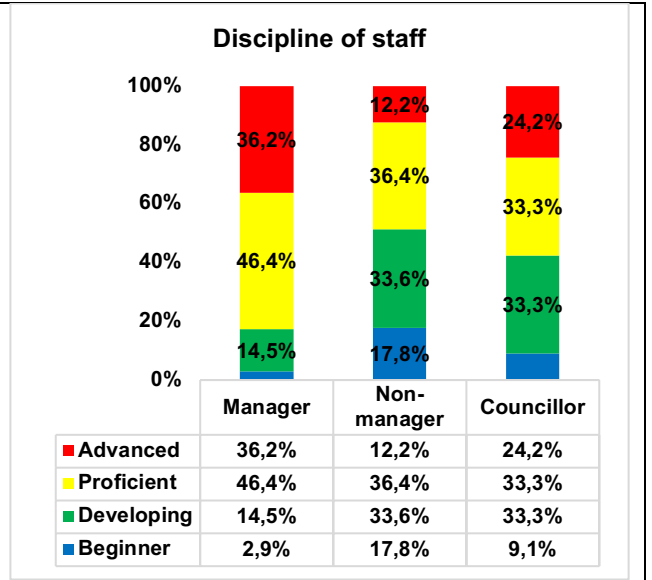


Figure 61: Discipline of staff

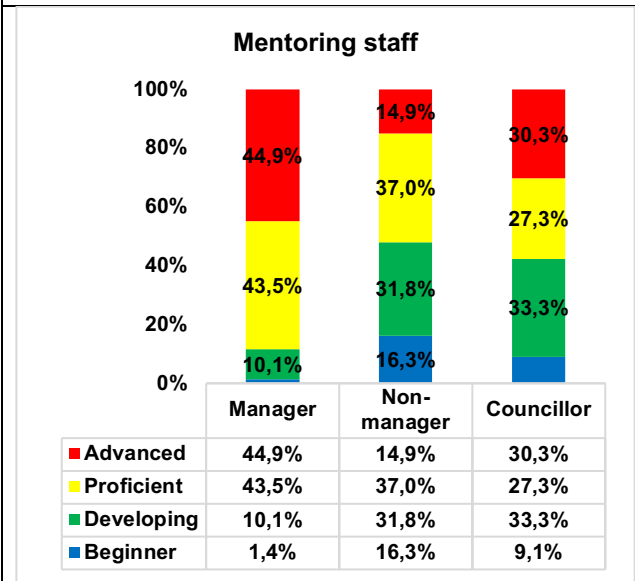


Figure 62: Mentoring staff

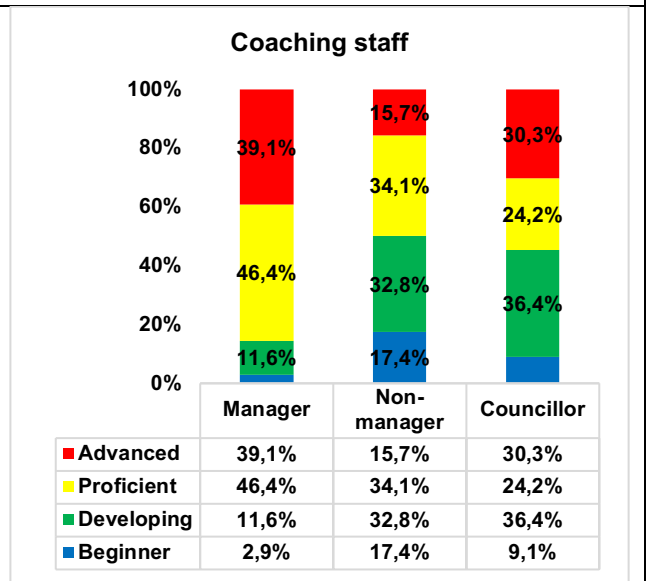


Figure 63: Coaching staff

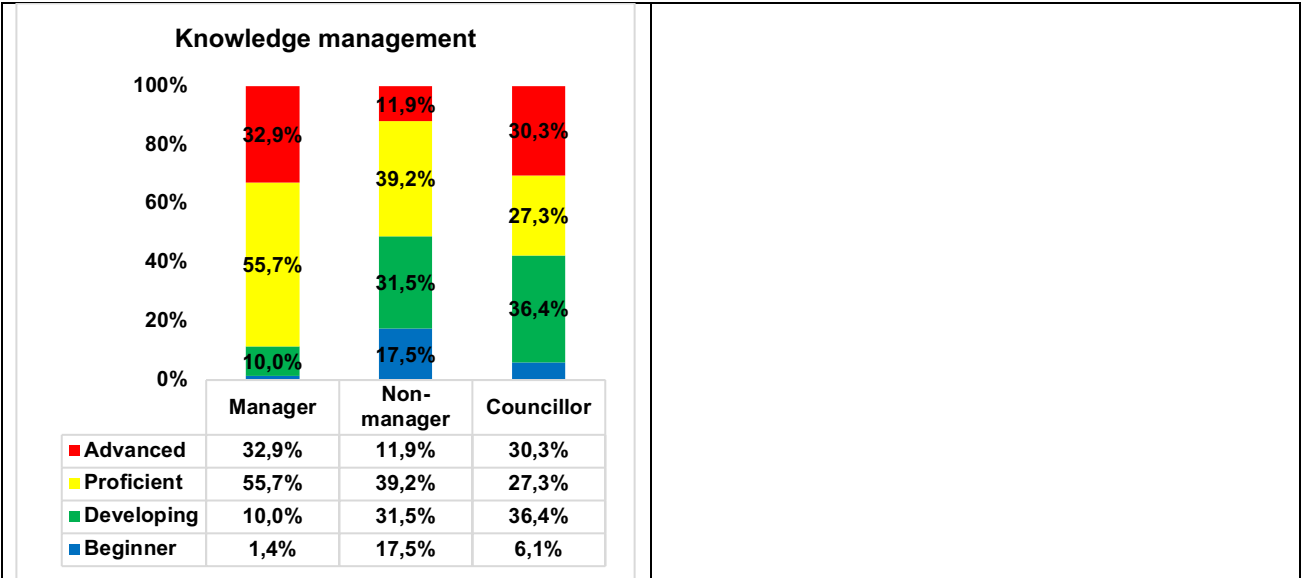


Figure 64: Knowledge management

APPENDIX D – SECTION D: PUBLIC SERVICE ORIENTATION COMPETENCIES

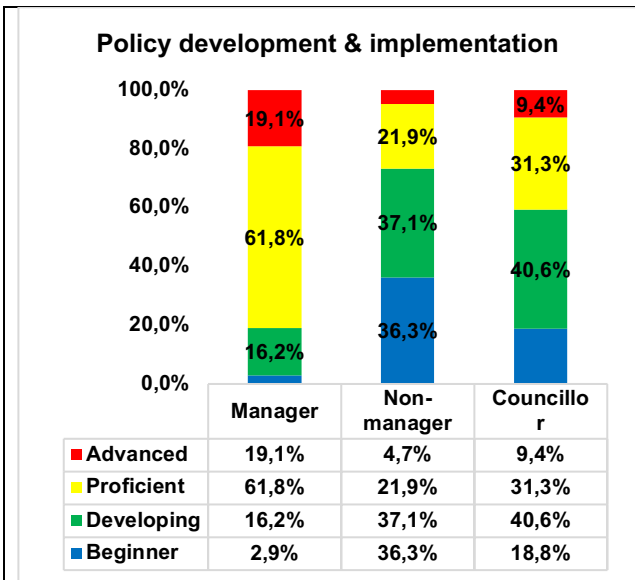


Figure 65: Policy development & implementation

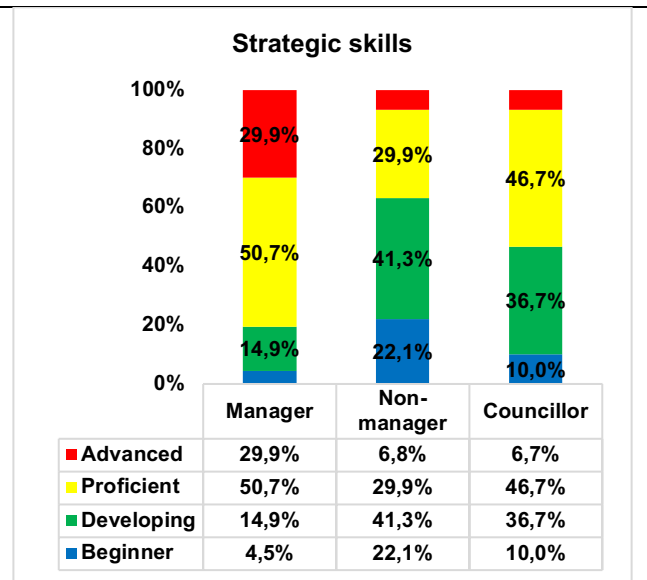


Figure 66: Strategic skills

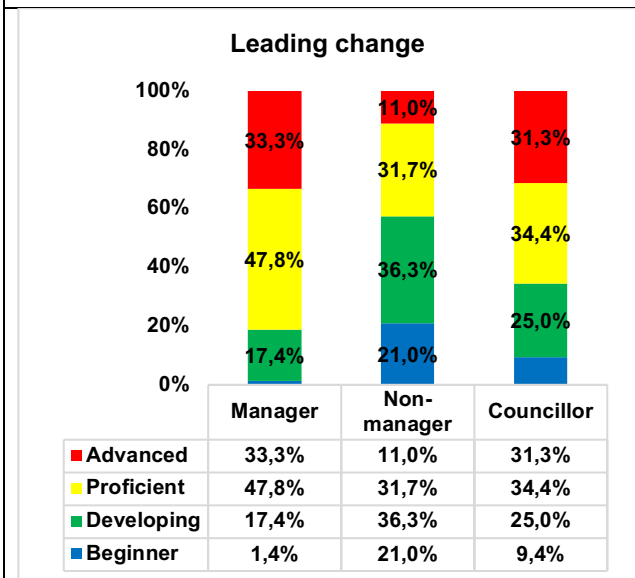


Figure 67: Leading change

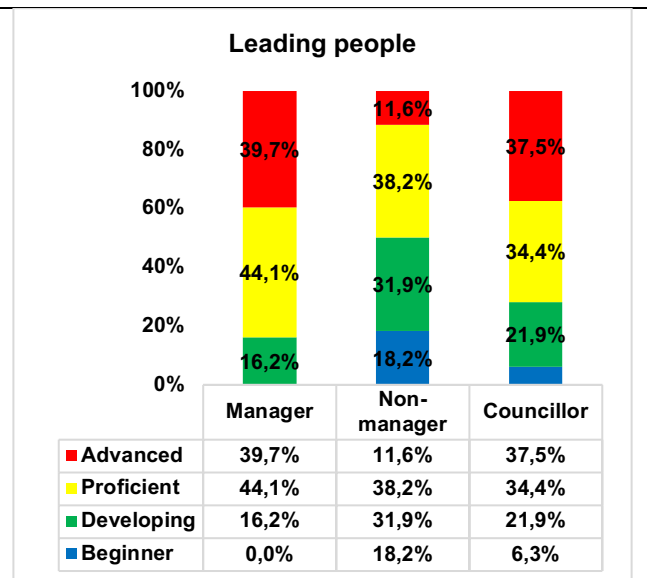


Figure 68: Leading people

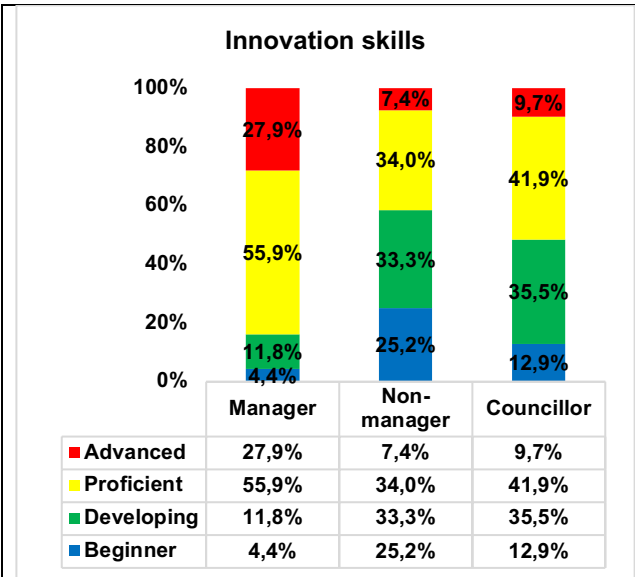


Figure 69: Innovation skills

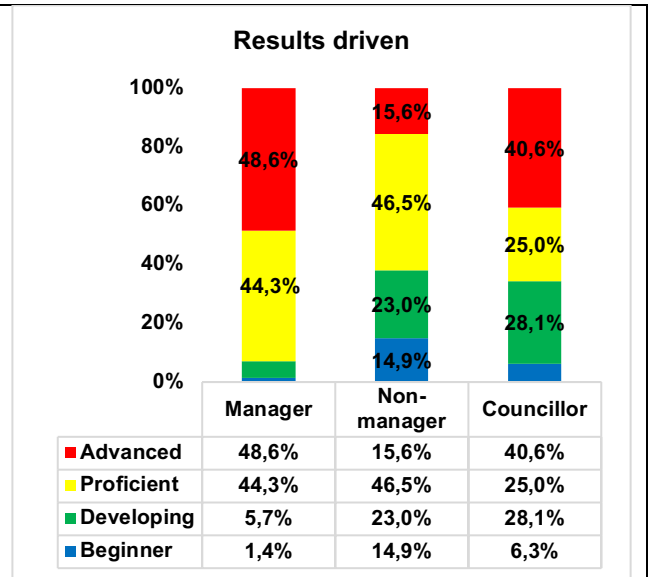


Figure 70: Results driven

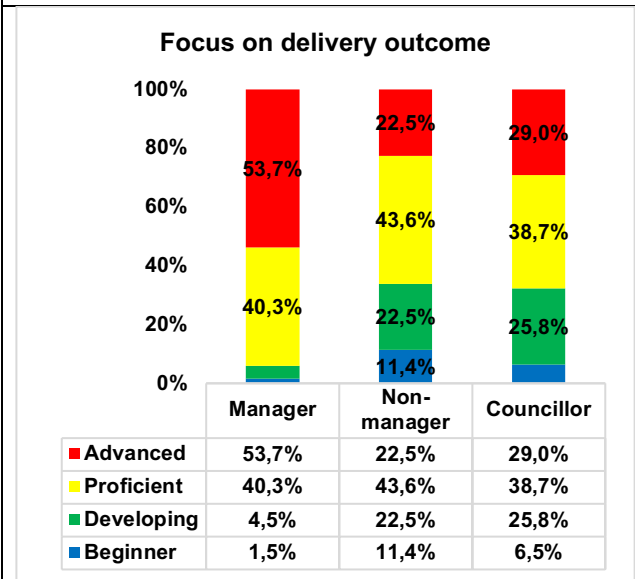


Figure 71: Focus on delivery outcome

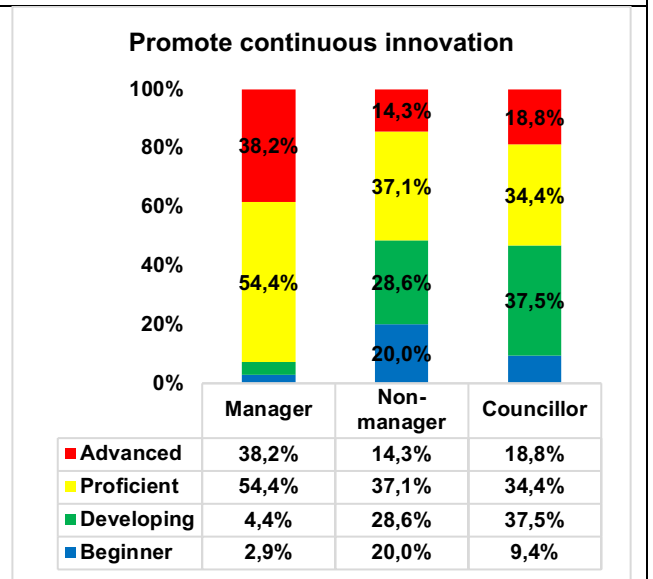


Figure 72: Promote continuous innovation

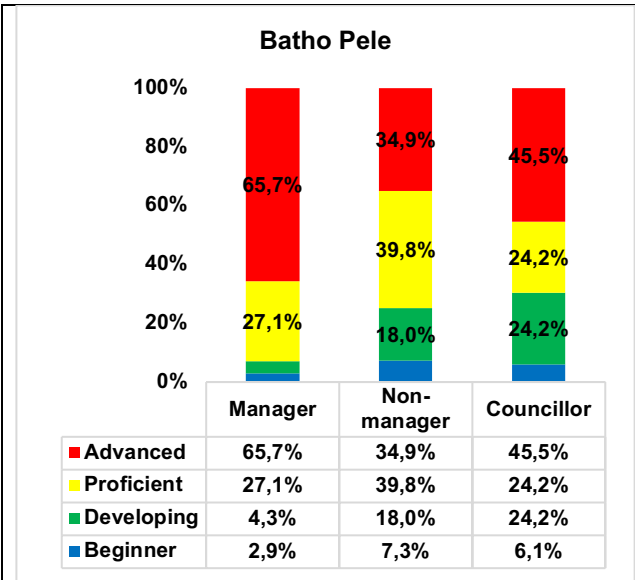


Figure 73: Batho Pele

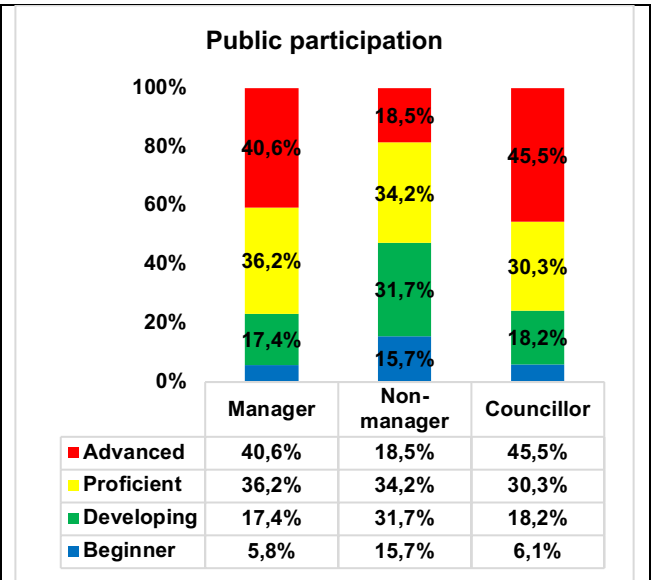


Figure 74: Public participation

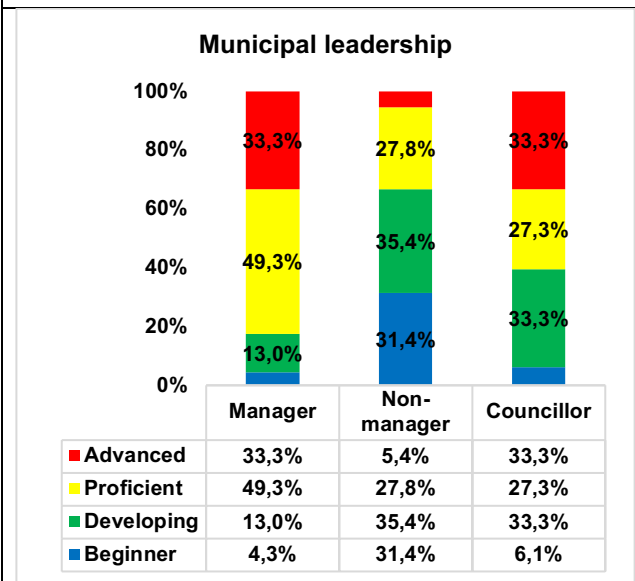


Figure 75: Municipal leadership

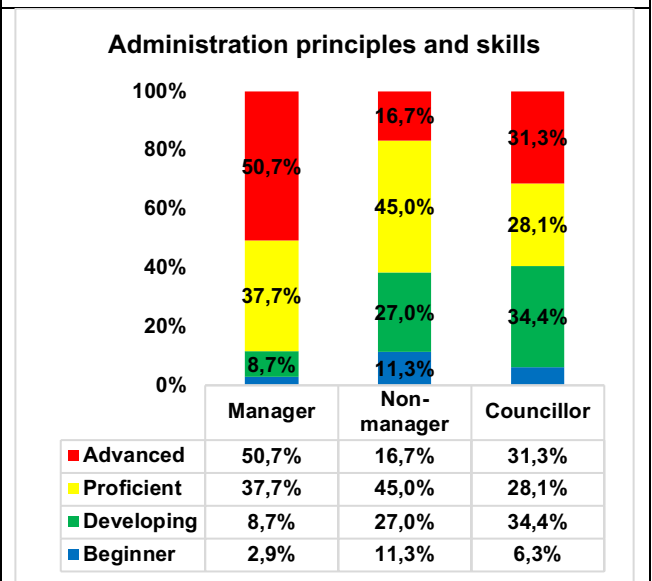


Figure 76: Administration principles & skills

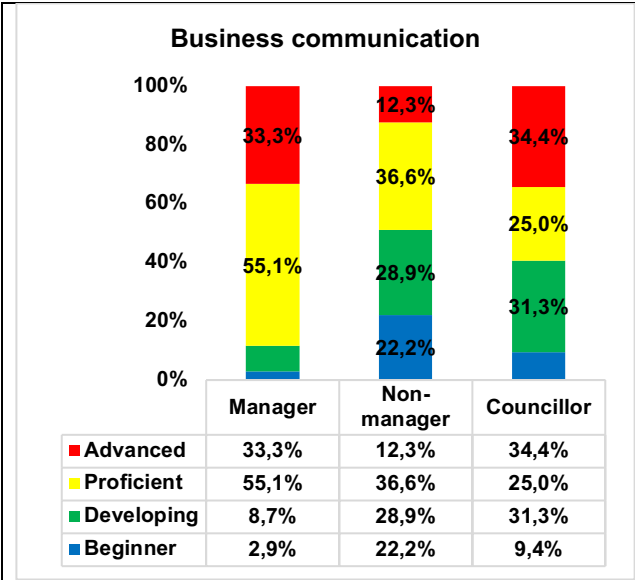


Figure 77: Business communication

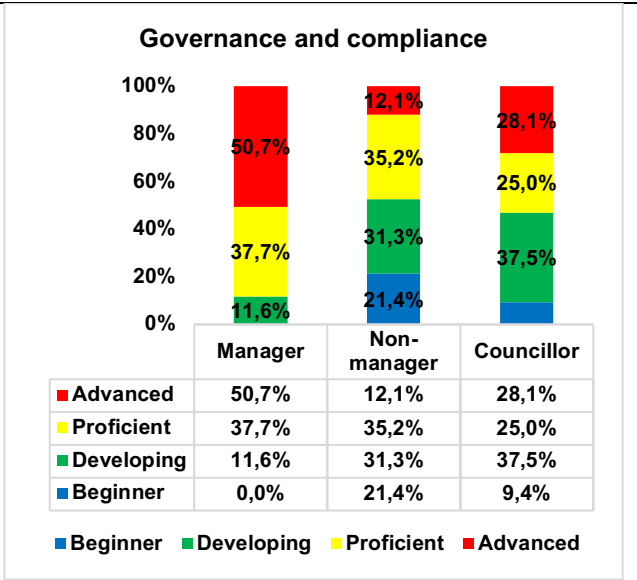


Figure 78: Governance & compliance

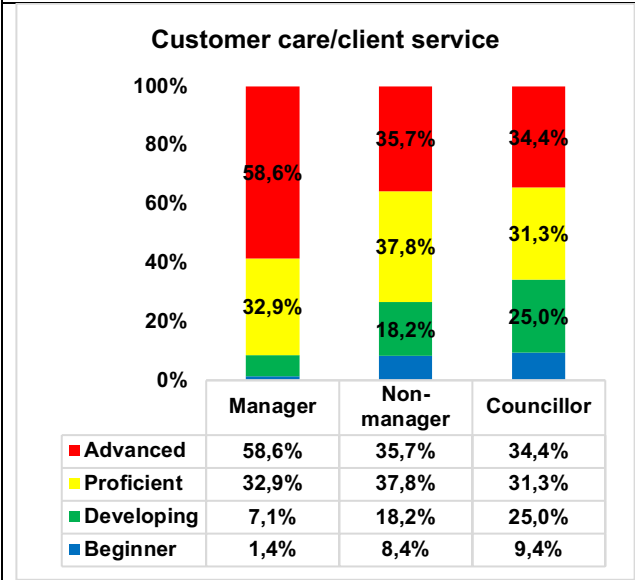


Figure 79: Customer care/client service

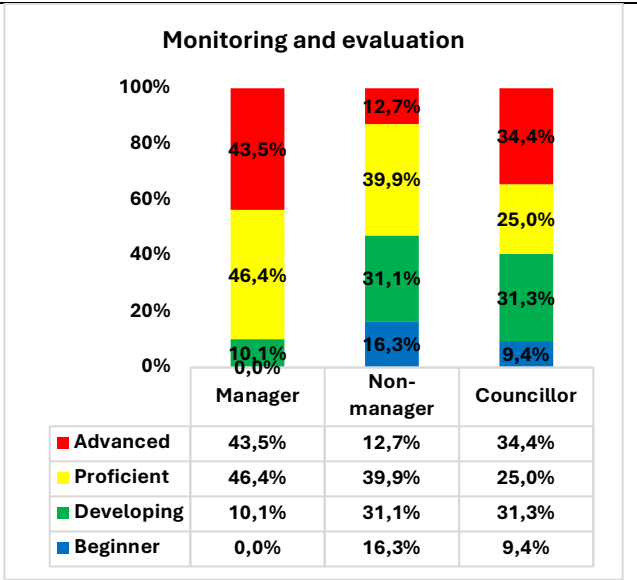


Figure 80: Monitoring & evaluation

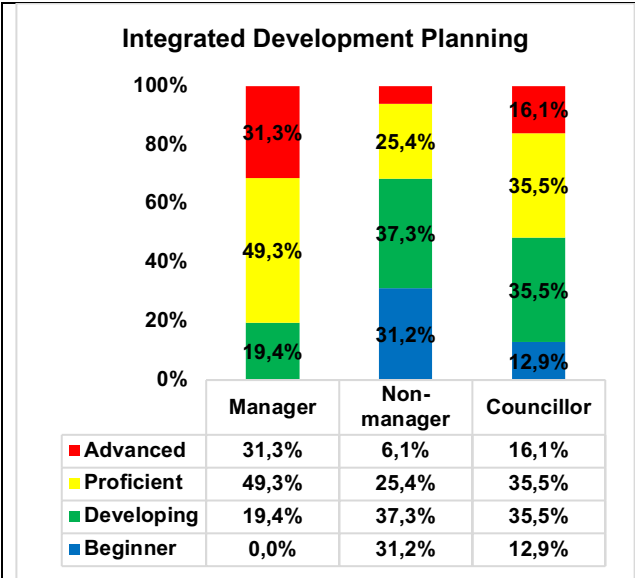


Figure 81: Integrated Development Planning

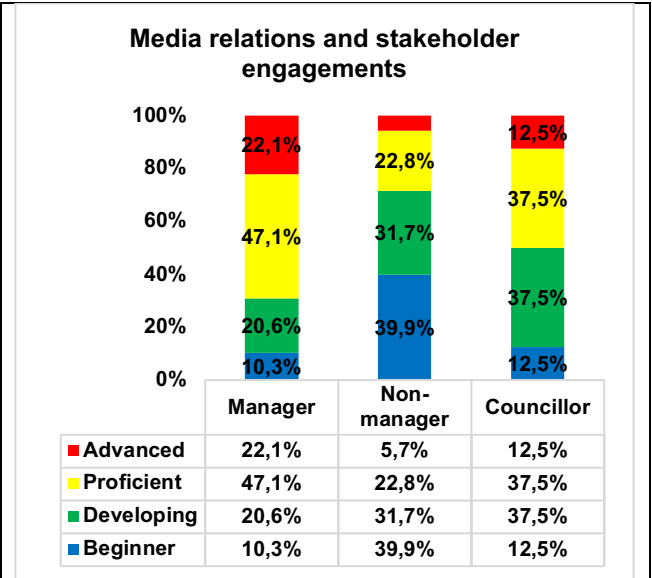


Figure 82: Media relations & stakeholder engagements

APPENDIX E – SECTION E: INSTITUTIONAL CULTURAL CONTEXT

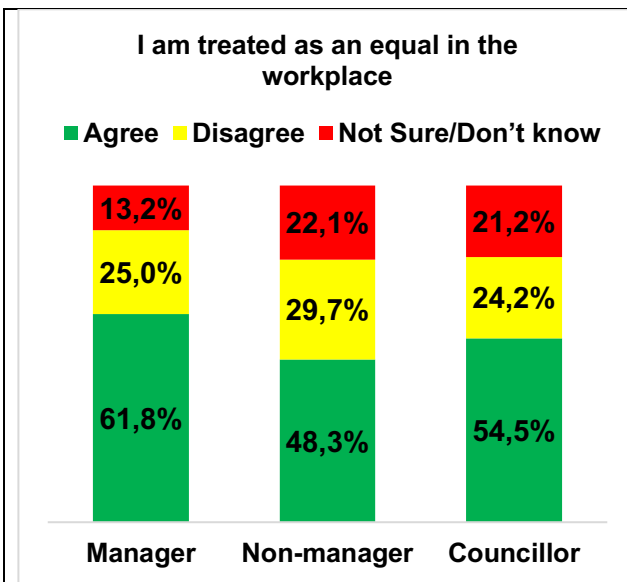


Figure 83: I am treated as an equal in the workplace

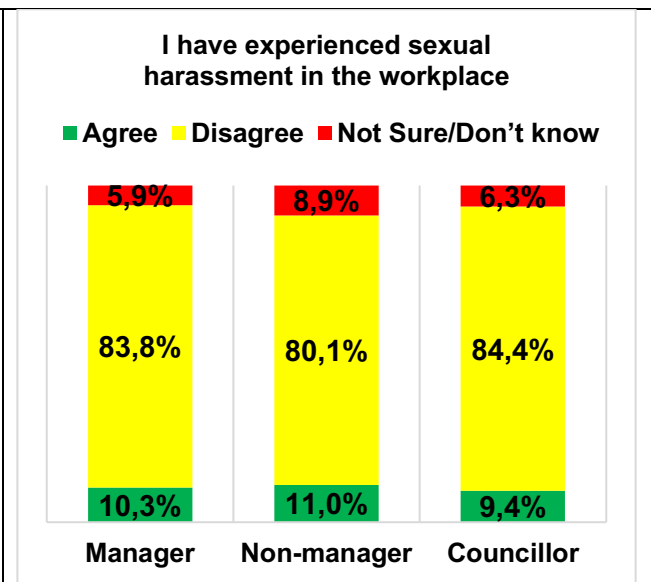


Figure 84: I have experienced sexual harassment in the workplace

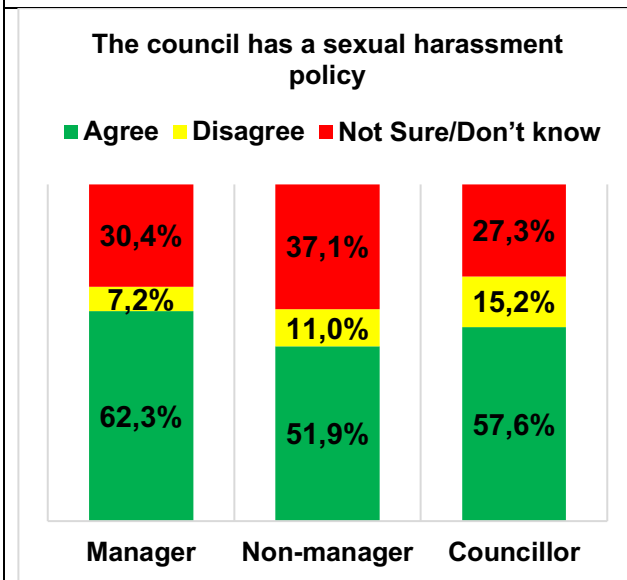


Figure 85: The council has a sexual harassment policy

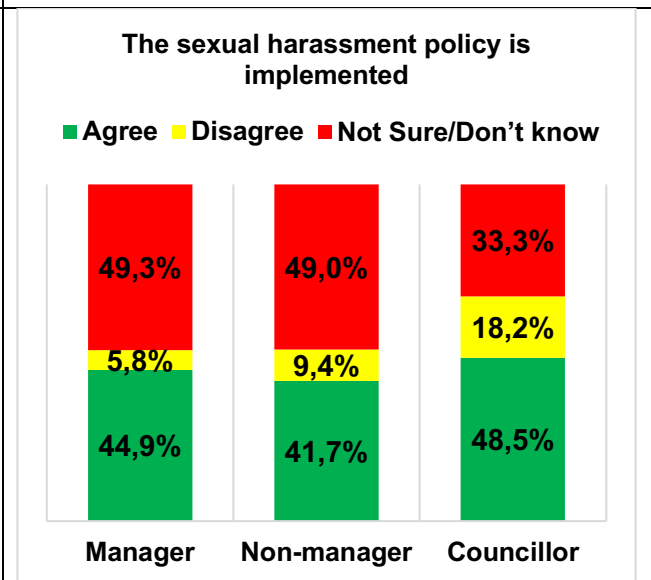


Figure 86: The sexual harassment policy is implemented

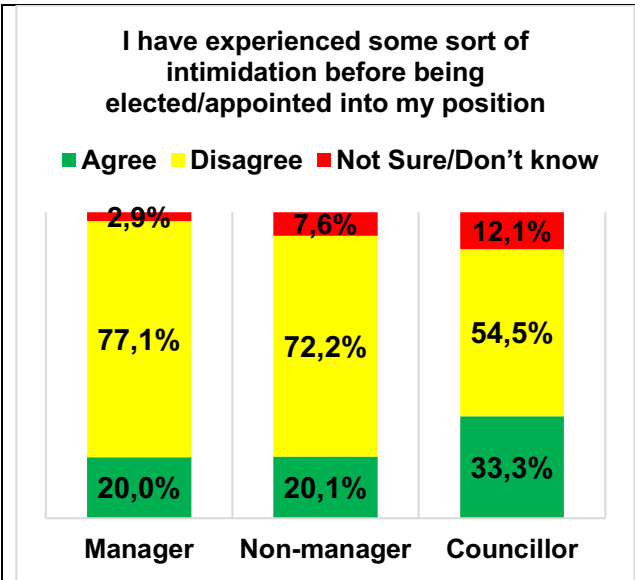


Figure 87: I have experienced some sort of intimidation before being elected/appointed into my position

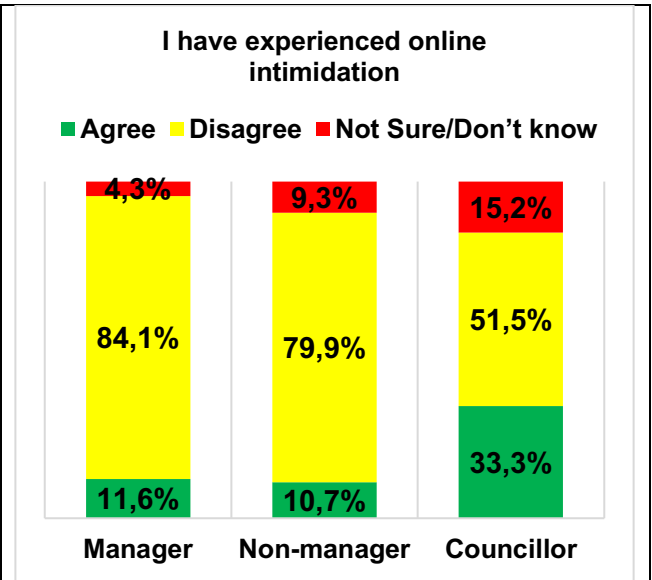


Figure 88: I have experienced online intimidation

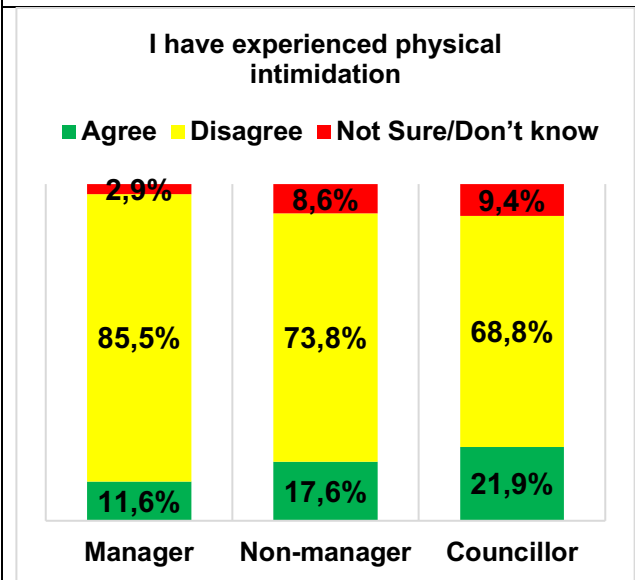


Figure 89: I have experienced physical intimidation

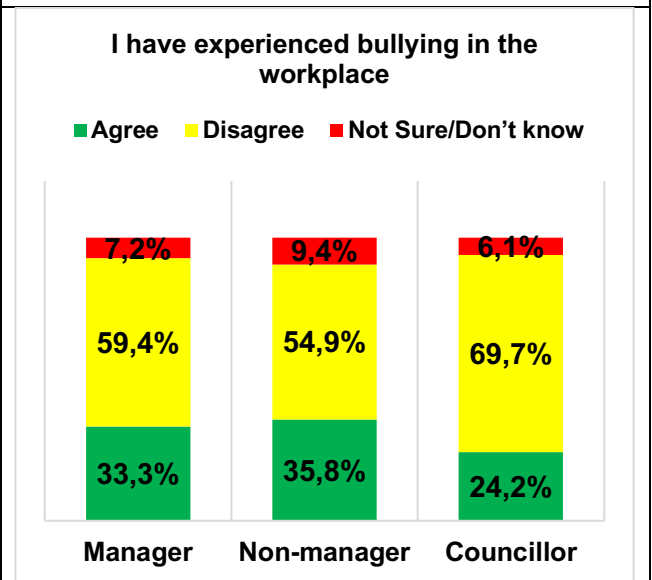


Figure 90: I have experienced bullying in the workplace

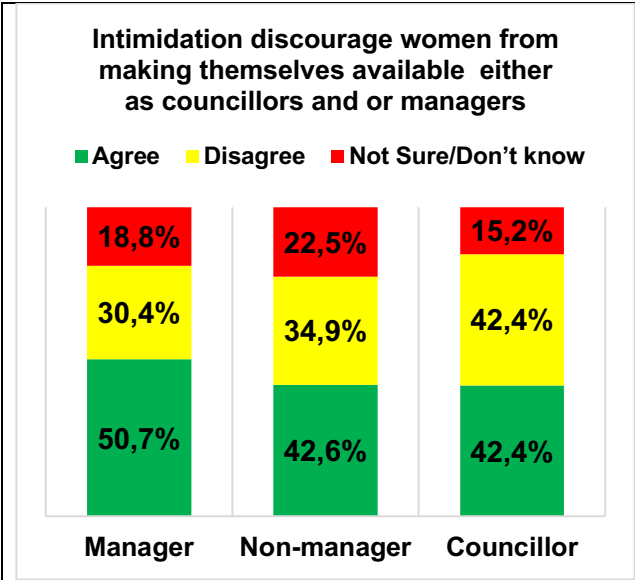


Figure 91: Intimidation discourage women from making themselves available either as councillors and or managers

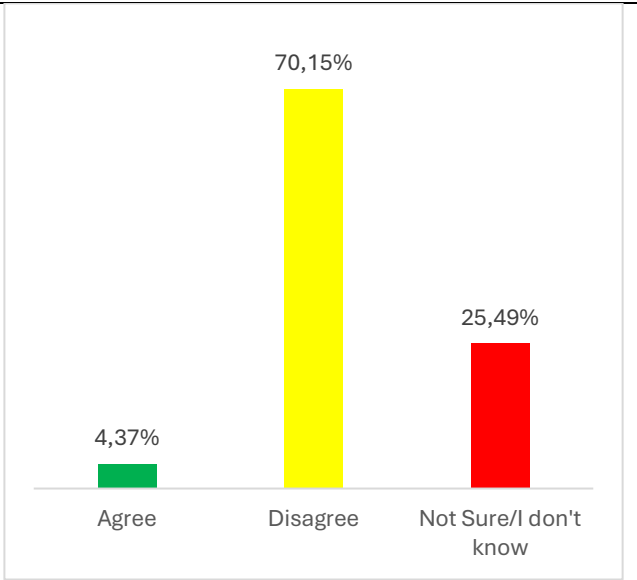


Figure 92: The council has a childcare

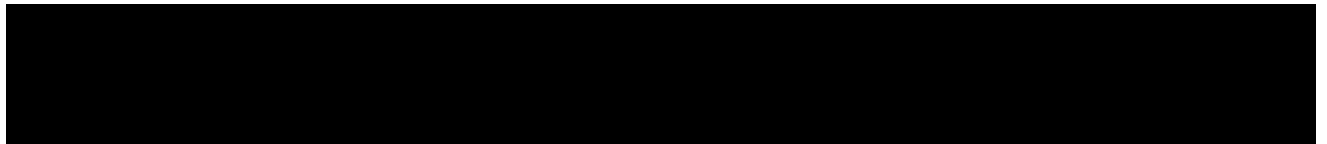
APPENDIX F – COMPETENCE ASSESMENT: WOMEN LEADERSHIP IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

COMPETENCE ASSESSMENT©

WOMEN LEADERSHIP IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Please be assured of anonymity

Missing info in the box- Section, etc



Please supply us with the relevant information by ticking the box below:

1. I am a

- | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| Councillor (Mayco Member) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Ward Councillor | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| PR Councillor | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Intern | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Non-Manager | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Manager | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Senior Manager | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Executive Director | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Municipal Manager | <input type="checkbox"/> |

2. Working experience (number of years) _____

3. My municipality _____

4. My province _____

5. My qualification on the National Qualifications Framework

National Qualification Framework	Description	Please tick where appropriate
NQF 1	General Certificate - Learners receive at the end of Grade 9 (Standard 7)	<input type="checkbox"/>
NQF 2	Elementary Certificate - Indicates you have Grade 10 (Standard 8).	<input type="checkbox"/>
NQF 3	Intermediate Certificate - Grade 11 (Standard 9) or equivalent obtained from courses taken through accredited training bodies	<input type="checkbox"/>
NQF 4	National Certificate - Awarded to matriculants (Grade 12 – Standard 10)	<input type="checkbox"/>
NQF 5	Higher Certificate – Learners receive this certificate after completing a vocational course	<input type="checkbox"/>
NQF 6	Diploma/Advanced Certificate One year of full-time study or two years of part-time study.	<input type="checkbox"/>
NQF 7	Bachelor’s Degree and Advanced Diploma	<input type="checkbox"/>
NQF 8	Bachelor Honour’s Degree/ Postgraduate Diploma	<input type="checkbox"/>
NQF 9	Master’s Degree	<input type="checkbox"/>
NQF 10	Doctoral Degree	<input type="checkbox"/>

<https://pagely.co.za/nqf-levels/>

From the list below please tick the box indicating your levels of proficiency:

1. **Beginner:** Limited or no experience. Basic understanding but lacks practical application.
2. **Developing:** Some experience and knowledge. Developing foundational skills.
3. **Proficient:** Moderate to solid experience. Demonstrates a good understanding and proficiency in the subject.
4. **Advanced:** Extensive experience and expertise. Demonstrates exceptional skill and knowledge.

	Professional/Functional Competence	Beginner	Developing	Proficient	Advanced
	The specialized skills that the individual has cultivated within their professional domain.				
1.	Financial Management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	Protocol Management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	Computer Literacy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.	First-Aid in the Workplace	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.	Health & Wellness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.	Presentation Skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.	Project Management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8.	Ethical conduct	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.	Report Writing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10.	Occupational Health & Safety	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Professional/Functional Competence	Beginner	Developing	Proficient	Advanced
	The specialized skills that the individual has cultivated within their professional domain.				
11.	Local Government Law & Public Administration	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12.	Planning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13.	Monitoring & Evaluation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14.	Interpersonal Skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15.	Community/Stakeholder Engagement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16.	Client Customer Services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17.	Change Management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.	Legal Skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19.	Risk Management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20.	Quality Management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21.	Coaching & Mentoring	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22.	Public Speaking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23.	Data Processes and Analysis	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
24.	Proactiveness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



From the list below please tick the box indicating your levels of proficiency:

1. **Beginner:** Limited or no experience. Basic understanding but lacks practical application.
2. **Developing:** Some experience and knowledge. Developing foundational skills.
3. **Proficient:** Moderate to solid experience. Demonstrates a good understanding and proficiency in the subject.
4. **Advanced:** Extensive experience and expertise. Demonstrates exceptional skill and knowledge.

	Personal Competencies	Beginner	Developing	Proficient	Advanced
	The components or attributes of the individual that enables him/her to perform optimally.				
1.	Facilitation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	Decision-Making	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	Critical Thinking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.	Problem Solving	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.	Conducting & Managing Meetings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.	Time Management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.	Problem analysis	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8.	Active Listening	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.	Integrity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Personal Competencies	Beginner	Developing	Proficient	Advanced
	The components or attributes of the individual that enables him/her to perform optimally.				
10.	Motivating	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11.	Interviewing people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12.	Networking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13.	People-driven management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14.	Perseverance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15.	Conflict Management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

From the list below please tick the box indicating your levels of proficiency:

1. **Beginner:** Limited or no experience. Basic understanding but lacks practical application.
2. **Developing:** Some experience and knowledge. Developing foundational skills.
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4. **Advanced:** Extensive experience and expertise. Demonstrates exceptional skill and knowledge.

	Public Service Orientation Competencies	Beginner	Developing	Proficient	Advanced
	This relates to the ability of the individual to reflect one's personal capacity and orientation.				
1.	Policy Development and Implementation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	Strategic skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	Innovation skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.	Leading change	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.	Leading people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.	Results-driven	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.	Focusing on delivery outcomes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8.	Promote continuous innovation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

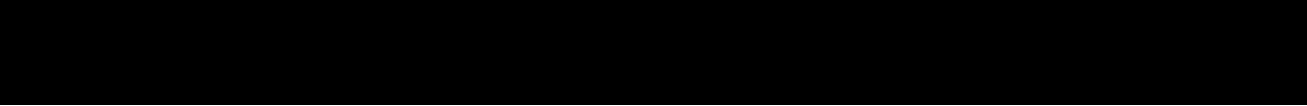
	Public Service Orientation Competencies	Beginner	Developing	Proficient	Advanced
	This relates to the ability of the individual to reflect one's personal capacity and orientation.				
9.	Batho Pele	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10.	Public Participation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11.	Municipal Leadership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12.	Administration Principles and Skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13.	Business Communication	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14.	Governance and Compliance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15.	Customer Care/Client Services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16.	Monitoring & Evaluation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17.	Integrated Development Planning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.	Media Relations and Stakeholder Engagement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

From the list below please tick the box indicating your levels of proficiency:

1. **Beginner:** Limited or no experience. Basic understanding but lacks practical application.
2. **Developing:** Some experience and knowledge. Developing foundational skills.
3. **Proficient:** Moderate to solid experience. Demonstrates a good understanding and proficiency in the subject.
4. **Advanced:** Extensive experience and expertise. Demonstrates exceptional skill and knowledge.

	Management/Leadership Competencies	Beginner	Developing	Proficient	Advanced
	These refer to the ability to work with and through others on tasks and the ability to mobilize around a common cause.				
1.	Relationship Building	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	Organization	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	Active Listening	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.	Planning and strategizing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.	Conflict resolution	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.	Social skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.	Interpersonal skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8.	Inclusiveness and Diversity Management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.	People management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Management/Leadership Competencies	Beginner	Developing	Proficient	Advanced
	These refer to the ability to work with and through others on tasks and the ability to mobilize around a common cause.				
10.	Participative Management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11.	Capacity to lead and motivate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12.	Ability to see and develop potential	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13.	Ability to delegate tasks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14.	Fostering teamwork and collaboration	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15.	Analytical thinking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16.	Conceptual thinking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17.	Strategic thinking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.	Discipline of Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19.	Mentoring of Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20.	Coaching of Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21.	Knowledge Management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



From the list below please tick the box indicating “Agree”, “Not Sure/I don’t Know” or “Disagree:

	Context	Agree	Not Sure/ I don’t Know	Disagree
1.	I am treated as an equal in the workplace	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	I have experienced sexual harassment in the workplace	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	The council has a sexual harassment policy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.	The sexual harassment policy is implemented	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.	I have experienced some sort of intimidation before being elected/appointed into my position	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6.	I have experienced online intimidation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7.	I have experienced physical intimidation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8.	I have experienced bullying in the workplace	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9.	Intimidation discourage women from making themselves available either as councillors and or managers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10.	The council has a childcare facility	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Thank you for your cooperation

APPENDIX G – FOCUS GROUPS WITH STAFF AND COUNCILLORS

QUESTION SCHEDULE: FOCUS GROUP WITH STAFF AND COUNCILLORS

OF MUNICIPALITIES AND MUNICIPAL ENTITIES

FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS TO APPOINTED OFFICIALS

1. What are the skills and competencies that you consider important for women in administrative local government leadership and why ?
2. What are the barriers faced by women in the workplace ?
3. What are the 4th industrial revolution skills that is needed by women in the workplace ?
4. What are the gaps in the current skills audit processes and where can we improve ?
5. How should the development and advancement of women in the workplace be addressed ?
6. How should men conduct themselves vis a vis women in the workplace?

FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS TO ELECTED OFFICIALS

1. How were you recruited to become a local councillor? (For probing: through the party or the ward committee, other?)
2. Did you have previous political experience?
3. What are some of the barriers/problems that you had to overcome when you became a councillor?
4. Did you receive training before you became a councillor and in what ways did this help you?
5. What are the skills and competencies that you consider important for women in political local government leadership and why?
6. What are the 4th industrial revolution skills that are needed by councillors in the workplace?
7. What are the gaps in the current skills audit processes and how can this be improved?
8. How should the development and advancement of women councillors in the workplace be addressed?
9. How should men conduct themselves vis a vis women in the workplace?

10. Have you experienced violence and intimidation as a councillor and please describe this? (Was it physical, psychological or online)
11. In your view do men also experience this type of violence and intimidation?

Fundamental competencies: Personal development**Personal development outcomes:**

- Demonstrates commitment to openness, honesty, inclusiveness, loyalty, high standards and quality output.
- Behaves consistently with personal values and beliefs.
- Promotes and practices appropriate social and corporate values in all interactions.
- Establishes and maintains personal credibility, acts with integrity, and is self-aware.
- Committed to personal growth and ongoing learning and development.
- Values well-being of self and maintains a healthy work-life balance.

1) Development of a personal strategic plan

A personal strategic plan constitutes a blueprint for future action (short, medium and long term), and consequently:

- Provides a basis for decision-making and standards by which to live.
- Assists in maintaining balance in each area of one's life, contributes towards becoming a more effective leader, spouse, parent, friend, and community member.
- Helps to understand where to direct attention and energy, how to balance the different aspects of life, and how to timeously recognise an imbalance to take corrective steps.
- Sets direction and aligns resources.

2) Emotional intelligence in leadership

This aspect refers to the ability to understand and manage your own emotions, and those of the people around you.

- What is emotional intelligence?
- Why emotional intelligence is so important for leaders.
- How a leader can improve his/her own emotional intelligence.
- Emotional intelligence is essential for success.

3) Five key elements of emotional intelligence:

- Self-awareness.
- Self-regulation.
- Motivation.
- Empathy.
- Social skills.

a) Self-awareness

- Understand feelings and know how emotions and actions can affect others.
- Understand personal strengths and weaknesses and behaving with humility.

b) Self-regulation

- The leader's flexibility and commitment to personal accountability.
- Locus of control and self-regulation.
- Staying in control: Communication, decision-making and knowing personal values.

c) Motivation

- Self-motivated leaders work consistently toward their goals, and they have extremely high standards for the quality of their work.
- How can one improve one's motivation?
- Re-examine why you're doing your job.
- Know where you stand.
- Be hopeful and find something good.

d) Empathy

- Managing a successful team or organisation.
- Earning the respect and loyalty of a team.
- Put yourself in someone else's position.
- Pay attention to body language.

e) Social Skills

- Master conflict resolution.

- Improve your communication skills.
- Learn how to praise others.

Core competencies: Interpersonal Development

Interpersonal development outcomes:

- Define leadership development within the unique context of the organisation and its culture and mission.
- Identify the organisation's leadership development needs and match the solution to the need.
- Assist individuals to learn about themselves and others, grow in own personal skills and abilities, and change and adapt to new circumstances and opportunities.
- Acts as one team and ensures others perform in accordance with clear expectations and goals.
- Motivates others to achieve expected performance goals.

1) Learning to lead: Understanding leadership and developing one's leadership style

a) Defining leadership

- A traditional view of leadership.
- Modern ideas about leadership.
- Leadership and management.

b) Theories of leadership

- Early research.
- Traits, behaviours and situations.
- Modern trait theory.

c) Styles of leadership

- Leadership styles.
- Alternative models of leadership behaviours.
- Leadership style applications.
- Leadership style assessment.

d) Developing specific leadership styles

- Developing as a coercive/commanding leader.
- Developing as a pace-setting leader.
- Developing as an authoritative/visionary leader.
- Developing as an affiliative leader.
- Developing as a democratic leader.
- Developing as a coaching leader.

e) The importance of ethics in leadership

- The importance of natural laws.
- Four levels of principle-centred leadership.

2) Leadership skills: developing the skills you need to lead

a) An introduction to skills for leadership

b) Getting organised

- The key to good time management and organisation.
- Principles of good time management and organisation.

c) Delegation skills

- From no control to total control.
- Levels of delegation.
- Key skills in delegating work.

d) Giving and receiving feedback

- What is effective feedback?
- Receiving feedback.

e) Motivating others and motivation from a more senior position

- Motivational techniques.
- Setting goals that are challenging, yet achievable.
- Show your appreciation.
- Help people to develop 'mastery'.

- Share the big picture.

f) Strategic thinking, creativity and innovation

- What is strategy?
- Generating new ideas: creative thinking techniques.
- Applying new ideas: innovation.
- Types of innovation.
- Environmental influences on innovation.
- Approaches to managing innovation and change.