

RESEARCH WORKSHOP  
SEMINAR SERIES 2024

# A multidisciplinary approach to the study of Urban Crisis:

A focus on the City of Johannesburg

26  
SEPT

Time: 1-3pm,

Venue: Public Affairs Research Institute  
and online

<https://forms.gle/birebjJS86T2ycoK7>

<https://rebrand.ly/4b17biw>

## The failure of a Coalition Across Difference: A Case Study of the Metropolitan City of Johannesburg by Moeketsi Koahela

The City of Johannesburg (COJ) Municipality is currently run by a coalition government made possible through a coalition of the African National Congress (ANC), Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF), the Patriotic Alliance (PA), Action SA, ATM, and several smaller parties. Coalition governments in the city have been in place since 2016, which has to date seen the metropolitan city go through eleven executive mayorships in what has been described as “Johannesburg’s Musical Mayors” (Maverick, 2024).

This paper analyses the civil society group, Johannesburg Crisis Alliance (JCA) coining of the municipal city of Johannesburg as “A City in Crisis” due to the continuous failure of political principles across parties finding each other and effectively lead established coalition governments. The paper considers a comprehensive intervention that covers political, governance, administrative and service delivery domains by exploring eight options JCA has proposed open to individual citizens, organisations, and government to address this city crisis.

## The viability of legal interventions in addressing municipal dysfunction and an exploration of the burgeoning judicial role:

A focus on the City of Johannesburg  
by Claire Franklyn

Local government in South Africa is in crisis. The City of Johannesburg provides a snapshot of some of these challenges, including coalition government instability, failing infrastructure, an electricity and water crisis, a housing crisis, and various financial challenges. As with other municipalities in crisis, it appears to require something more than the continued use of (sometimes inadequately implemented) constitutional accountability and intergovernmental monitoring and support mechanisms. Various corrective modes of legal intervention have been proposed as offering interim relief, including: an adjustment to the system of municipal governance, a section 139 intervention, and the dissolution of a municipal council. The legalities, recent experiences, strengths, weaknesses and overall viability of these intervention options are explored, together with a consideration of the burgeoning judicial role and the scope for community involvement. While the proposed legal interventions will likely not solve the embedded multifaceted crises facing the City, they may offer a first step in addressing and remedying some of the drivers of these crises.

Moeketsi Koahela is an education and training officer in the Youth Activism Programme at the Ahmed Kathrada Foundation (AKF) and represent the foundation on the National Youth Coalition, where I am also the chairperson. He holds a Master of Arts in Sociology (2022) from the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.

### DISCUSSANT

Sarah Meny-Gibert heads the State Reform Programme at PARI. Her research interests are in the historical development of the state, public sector reform, and the governance of school education. Sarah holds a PhD and Masters from the University of Witwatersrand, and an undergraduate degree from the University of Cape Town.

Dr Claire Franklyn is an admitted attorney, working as a consultant, researcher and sessional lecturer, with a focus on constitutional law and public and regulatory law, and with a specific interest in issues affecting local and provincial government. The presentation is based on a paper prepared for the Gauteng City-Region Observatory with the title “Exploring possible interventions into dysfunctional local government in Gauteng”.