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South African Local Government Elections: Service Delivery Profile, Protests and Promises

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ABSTRACT This paper examines whether politicians fulfil their electoral promises and whether voters can rely on these promises when choosing political parties and candidates. Does voting based on campaign promises give an accurate representation of the local government's actions? To answer this question, the paper compares the service delivery records of communities with the promises made by various political parties during the 2016 South African local government elections. Using a qualitative approach, the paper systematically analyses research on political campaign promises in municipal elections. The study reveals a widespread belief that politicians are insincere in their campaign promises during election season. The paper argues that this perception undermines the effectiveness of voting in low-income communities, where some people choose to abstain or engage in protests or other forms of resistance to obtain basic services.