



Workers from the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP). The work opportunities created by the programme are highly insecure as they are temporary in nature; between four to six months. Moreover, the daily wage has not kept up with inflation.

# The Feminisation of the Economic Crisis

By Basani Baloyi

THE STRUCTURE OF SOUTH AFRICA’S labour force remains highly gendered. Women remain the likeliest to be unemployed and have a lower labour force participation and employment rate than men. Labour force participation (LFP) has grown for both men and women since the start of the Global Financial Crisis. Importantly, in both instances, the growth in the LFP since the crisis has been dominated by the growing numbers of those that are joining the unemployment line rather than the growth of those that have successfully secured employment.

Notwithstanding, women have fared better than men in securing employment since the crisis. This is largely due to the fact that men dominate sectors that compete with international markets i.e. tradable sectors. These sectors are the most vulnerable to declines in global aggregate demand. The manufacturing sector is one such tradable sector that is dominated by men; and incidentally many of the jobs lost by men are attributable to that sector.

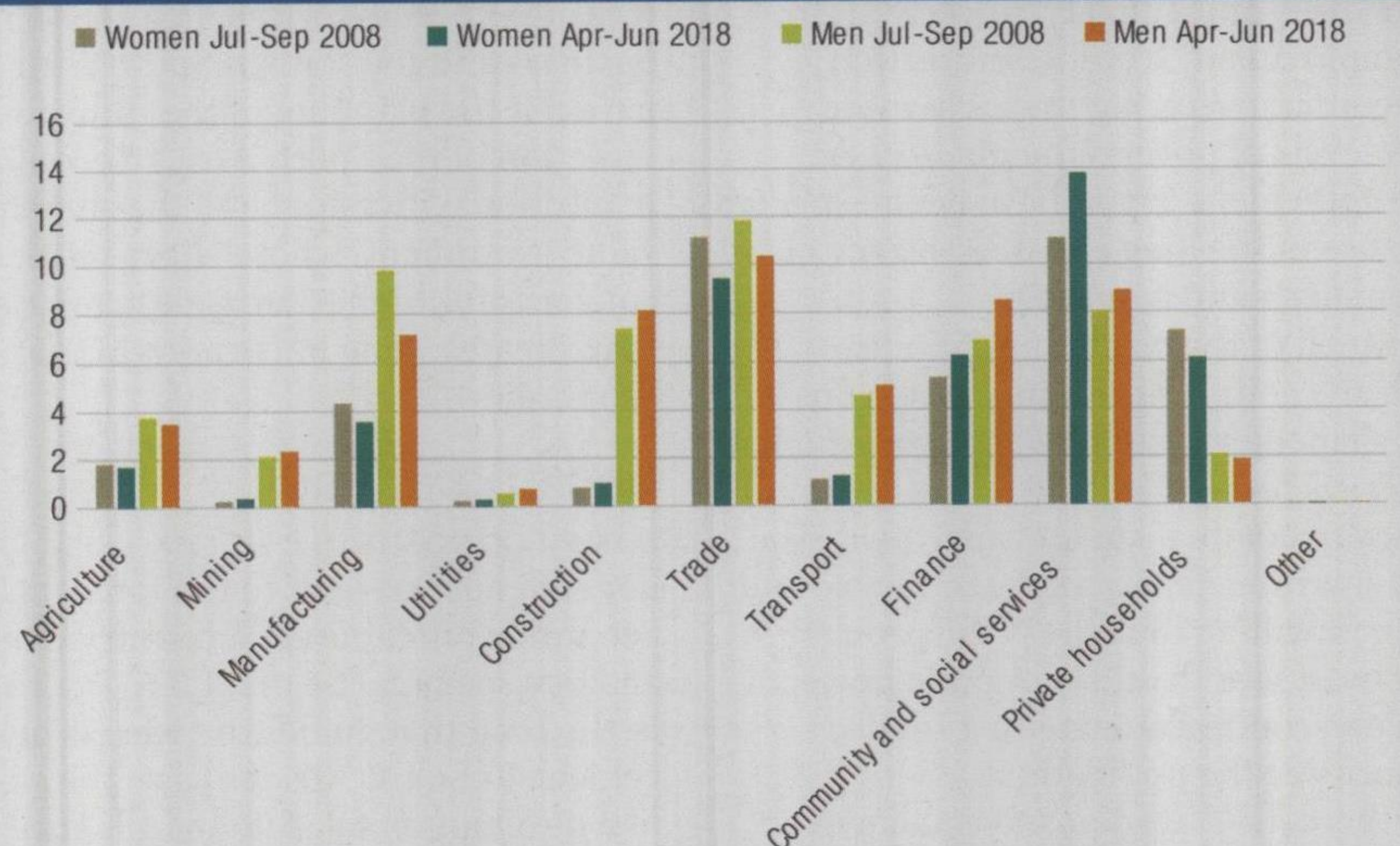
## Three Trends

THERE ARE THREE TRENDS THAT HAVE emerged to feminise the crisis as

experienced in the labour market and in the household. First, women have historically not been spared from the negative impact of the crisis in the male-dominated tradable sector, as the crisis in economic reproduction has a bearing on social reproduction. Both the work of Masoetsa and van Diel speak

to the impact of de-industrialisation in the manufacturing sector on the black household on account of neoliberal trade and macroeconomic policy. The household’s ability to be resilient and stable in the face of economic crisis has increasingly relied upon state transfers. The burden has become most prominently

Figure 1. Sectoral % share of total Employment by Sex, Jul – Sep 2008 to Apr – Jun 2018



Source: Quarterly Labour Force Survey