What municipalities should do in 2021

1. Informal settlement residents face persistent risks due to inadequate service provision. Municipalities could do more to protect these communities – even within tight budgets.

2. Temporary services are more expensive to install and maintain than permanent services and they do not assure the dignity and health of residents. We understand why temporary services are sometimes necessary – but they should not be used beyond the short term.

3. When households are compelled to share services, government should budget for and set dignified and comprehensive service standards. The current practice of specifying that each tap should be no further than a given distance from each household is not sufficient, because it does not indicate a maximum number of households per tap.

4. Municipalities should budget for and speed up incremental delivery that focuses on permanent service provision. Over the medium term they should work towards the provision of 1-to-1 services where each household has its own tap/s and toilet. This is an important step towards formalising settlements and promoting security of tenure.

5. In the short term this means providing free-standing taps, communal ablution blocks, or flush toilets that are safe to access and available at a standard that is at least equal to or higher than the national norm.

6. Maintenance and repair of infrastructure is a huge problem in all municipalities. Sometimes this is a budget issue, but it is often also an issue of ineffective fault reporting and tracking mechanisms. In the short-term municipalities can work more closely with Asivikelane and other stakeholders to establish community-based mechanisms for fault reporting and maintenance.

7. Asivikelane can help municipalities engage communities in the budget and service delivery processes which affect them. The voices of women, people with disabilities and the elderly are especially important because they bear the brunt of poor service delivery.

What will Asivikelane do in 2021?

1. Publish our monthly traffic lights on water, sanitation, refuse removal services and other issues such as stormwater drainage.

2. Keep engaging with municipalities to improve and increase basic services in informal settlements.

3. Develop budget proposals for how municipalities can finance this.

4. Strengthen informal settlement residents’ ability to monitor service delivery and engage with municipal budget processes.

5. Expand and include more informal settlements and municipalities in Asivikelane.