ASIVIKELANE
LEARNING SERIES ON BUDGET MONITORING

BY: NONTANDO NGAMLANA – EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
AFESIS-CORPLAN
(SOUTH AFRICA)
The provision of basic services such as access to clean and safe drinking water, decent sanitation, primary healthcare, education, etc. are all fundamental rights guaranteed under Section 27 of the South African Constitution.

So progressive is our Constitution that it even provides for the right to access adequate shelter, but for children, the right to shelter is an absolute right.

Local government is the sphere of government (out of the three interconnected and interdependent spheres of national, provincial and local) tasked with basic service provision.
STATE OF INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS BEFORE COVID-19

- The socio-economic context of South Africa has resulted in greater movements of people from the rural and peri-urban areas into urban areas.
- This led to an increase of informal settlements.
- Many cities have grappled to respond to the service delivery and housing needs of people living in informal settlements.
- Resource allocation in many cities has not been pro-poor or pro-informal settlement residents mostly because this is not a strong revenue base for many cities.

- People in informality were therefore less resilient and vulnerable to shocks of the nature that Covid-19 is.
- When Covid-19 hit, its impact was far more pronounced in informal settlements where access to water and decent sanitation was a challenge long before Covid-19.
A NATIONAL LOCKDOWN WAS ANNOUNCED IN SOUTH AFRICA IN MARCH 2020. DURING THIS TIME, ONLY ESSENTIAL SERVICES WERE ALLOWED TO CONTINUE, ALL OTHER MOVEMENT AND ACTIVITIES WERE GROUNDED.
• Government called for increased hygiene practices during this time.
• Having worked with many organizations whose work is in informal settlements long before Covid-19, IBP-SA and its partners Afesis-corplan, Planact, Development Action Group, Informal Settlements Dwellers South Africa and others were already alive to the impact the lockdown would have to the residents of informal settlements and to the basic service challenges in these areas.
• Government announced that it would repurpose its budgets to meet the service delivery needs of the most vulnerable communities, especially those in densely populated areas, such as most informal settlements across South Africa.
• As a way of attracting government’s attention to the service delivery needs of people in informal settlements, particularly during Covid-19, Asivikelane was born.
ASIVIKELANE
LET’S PROTECT ONE ANOTHER
WHAT IS ASIVIKELANE?

• Asivikelane - meaning ‘let us protect each other’ in isiZulu, one of South Africa’s dominant vernacular language - is a campaign for improved basic service provision in informal areas.

• The campaign seeks to amplify the voice of people living in informality, using evidence, to engage decision-makers for improved basic service provision.

• Ordinary citizens are mobilized to assess the state of their basic services and to collect evidence through photos and testimonials which are collated into a simple report to inform decision-makers.
A questionnaire is designed with 3 standard questions that get asked to ordinary residents at regular intervals (we started running weekly monitoring, and reduced to bi-weekly, and now it is monthly).

The three questions asked interrogate the accessibility of clean and safe drinking water, the accessibility and state of communal ablution facilities (state of sanitation services), and the last one interrogates the refuse removal services.

All of the services interrogates are central in the drive to increase hygiene, community resilience and to stop the spread of the corona virus.

As other social ills were emerging during the lockdown, such as the sharp increases in reported cases of gender based violence, questions around safety and women safety were interrogated, especially as it relates to the use of communal ablution facilities by women.

All questions were responded to using a mobile phone - an ordinary mobile device, not even a smart one. From time to time, respondents were encouraged to submit photographs in support of claims made.
... METHODOLOGY
The IBP-SA’s role in the campaign was a technical project management one. IBP-SA received the data from the various partners, all located in different cities, different provinces across the country. Analyzed the data and produced a simplified report that is then shared widely.

The partners collect data, clean and verify it for submission to IBP-SA.

Asivikelane started small, in just a few informal settlements a grew each week with more cities joining, more organizations joining. The data collection aspect also grew with each leading to an increased demand on those that were doing the technical analysis and report writing.
The primary audience for the report produced each week were the various city government who needed to respond to the identified service delivery gaps.

Various other government departments who have an oversight responsibility over cities and whose core functions involve sustainable settlements development, provision of water and sanitation also took great interest in Asivikelane and used it to guide their responses to Covid-19.

Because of the sustained and consistent manner in which Asivikelane produced intelligence, for weeks in a row and for months with no fail, it drew the attention of other civic organizations, academics and government departments who wanted to learn from the manner of organizing, mobilising and evidence collection that was used in Asivikelane.
LESSONS LEARNT & ACHIEVEMENTS
Almost all of the partner cities in Asivikelane took the evidence presented seriously and attempted to respond to the service delivery gaps identified. In Buffalo City Metro, the city provided additional water stand pipes, fixed communal toilets, provided more toilets, fixed street lights, provided chemicals for the cleaning and maintenance of communal ablution facilities.

The city further sped up the de-densification of highly dense informal settlements.

Furthermore, the City is now planning for piloting the electrification of informal settlements, a process it had refused to do due to its existing policy. The city has now initiated a process of amending its policies so as to enable the electrification of informal settlements.

Similar and other responses were achieved in other cities as well.
CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNT

• Food insecurity became the first challenge that the campaign was met with. South Africa was not alive to the extent of food insecurity of its people, particularly those in the informal economy, most of whom are in informal settlements.

• Most respondents alluded to the fact that they were about to die of hunger before they died from lack of clean drinking water or inaccessible ablution facilities. Many of the cities were also not ready to deal with this challenge.

ASIVIKELANE NEEDED TO FIND WAYS TO RESPOND TO THIS NEED.
... CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNT

- This was one of the key and valuable lessons learnt early on in Asivikelane, the campaign had to be responsive.
- The second challenge was that of sustaining energy. As the lockdown regulation were being adjusted, and the sense of urgency that Covid-19 had initially required of city administrators was dying down, cities did not deem it crucial to respond to the gaps identified through Asivikelane anymore. Respondents were also becoming fatigued after months of constant participation in the campaign. Asivikelane needed to adjust its frequency to respond to this fatigue while still maintaining the vigorousness of its methodology and the quality of its reporting. Agility is key and responsiveness if key.
- Even post Covid-19, the service delivery needs of people living in informal settlements are yet to be adequately addressed or to be met in systemic ways. Their vulnerability and lack of adequate resilience still persist. This necessitates a rethink of what the campaign looks like post Covid-19. There is already a commitment amongst the partners to continue with this work and to build from what has been achieved already.
Cities and rural administrative areas (municipalities) are resourced in different ways in South Africa. Cities are able to generate more revenue than intermediary and rural based municipalities. Cities also receive more service delivery oriented grants from the national fiscus than smaller rural municipalities.

Asivikelane focused on urban centers but attempted to respond to the basic service delivery challenges in smaller and rural municipalities as well. However, due to the different context, the results from the two backgrounds are packaged differently in the report.
... RURAL AND URBAN CONTEXT

VOICES OF INFORMAL SETTLEMENT RESIDENTS DURING THE COVID-19 CRISIS

WEDNESDAY 23 SEPTEMBER 2020: NUMBER 11

METRO MUNICIPALITIES: IN YOUR INFORMAL SETTLEMENT OVER THE LAST 7 DAYS...

- **BUFFALO CITY**
- **CAPE TOWN**
- **EKURHULENI**
- **ETHEKWINI**
- **JOHANNESBURG**
- **NELSON MANDELA BAY**
- **TSHWANE**

---

**...WAS THERE ENOUGH WATER FOR ALL RESIDENTS?**

- **BUFFALO CITY**
- **CAPE TOWN**
- **EKURHULENI**
- **ETHEKWINI**
- **JOHANNESBURG**
- **NELSON MANDELA BAY**
- **TSHWANE**

**...WERE THE TOILETS CLEANED/DRAINED?**

- **BUFFALO CITY**
- **CAPE TOWN**
- **EKURHULENI**
- **ETHEKWINI**
- **JOHANNESBURG**
- **NELSON MANDELA BAY**
- **TSHWANE**

**...WAS THE WASTE COLLECTED?**

- **BUFFALO CITY**
- **CAPE TOWN**
- **EKURHULENI**
- **ETHEKWINI**
- **JOHANNESBURG**
- **NELSON MANDELA BAY**
- **TSHWANE**

---

**RED:** 60% or fewer respondents said yes

**DARK ORANGE:** Between 60% and 75% of respondents said yes

**LIGHT ORANGE:** Between 75% and 90% of respondents said yes

**GREEN:** 90% or more respondents said yes

*Detailed results are available at: [www.internationalbudget.org/covid-monitoring/*] (http://www.internationalbudget.org/covid-monitoring/)*
VOICES OF INFORMAL SETTLEMENT RESIDENTS DURING THE COVID-19 CRISIS

WEDNESDAY 23 SEPTEMBER 2020: NUMBER 11

NON-METRO MUNICIPALITIES: IN YOUR INFORMAL SETTLEMENT OVER THE LAST 7 DAYS...

...WAS THERE ENOUGH WATER FOR ALL RESIDENTS?
- EMALAHLENI
- EMFULeni
- KNYSNA
- MOSSEL BAY
- MSUNDUZI
- WITZENBERG

...WERE THE TOILETS CLEANED/DRAINED?
- EMALAHLENI
- EMFULeni
- KNYSNA
- MOSSEL BAY
- MSUNDUZI
- WITZENBERG

...WAS THE WASTE COLLECTED?
- EMALAHLENI
- EMFULeni
- KNYSNA
- MOSSEL BAY
- MSUNDUZI
- WITZENBERG

RED: 60% or fewer respondents said yes
DARK ORANGE: Between 60% and 75% of respondents said yes
LIGHT ORANGE: Between 75% and 90% of respondents said yes
GREEN: 90% or more respondents said yes

Detailed results are available at: www.internationalbudget.org/covid-monitoring/
MEDIA ADVOCACY
• To a large extent, Asivikelane owes its success to the manner in which strategic communication was handled as part of the campaign.
• The campaign was intentional in how it presented the weekly report, in simple, easy to read, accessible ways. This made reading and understanding the findings easy for everyone.
• The campaign was also intentional in taking media into confidence about the plight of people in informal settlements. With each report produced, a media advisory is also produced and shared with a large and diverse group of media.
• The impact of the media campaign assisted in shining a spotlight on the performance of the various cities and in turn, the cities responded to the findings in meaningful and responsive ways.
• Community and National radio stations
• Provincial and National TV Stations
• Local and National Newspapers
• Online news
• With every release of the Asivikelane report we issue a press release to the media. We then issue statements, respond to question and conduct interviews.
... MEDIA RESPONSE

100 DAYS #ASIVIKELANE
#CoronavirusSA: Voices of informal settlement residents during the Covid-19 crisis

516,293
TWITTER IMPRESSIONS

276,241
FACEBOOK REACH
THANK YOU

#ASIVIKELANE

VOICES OF INFORMAL SETTLEMENT RESIDENTS DURING THE COVID-19 CRISIS