



VOICES OF INFORMAL SETTLEMENT RESIDENTS DURING THE COVID-19 CRISIS

WATER SERVICES PROVIDED TO INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS IN EMALAHLENI LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

by Planact and International Budget Partnership South Africa

1. INTRODUCTION

Recently, Emalahleni Local Municipality shared its “Schedule for Water Supply Through Water Tankers” with Planact. The schedule is dated 31 July 2020 and, during the month of October, Planact and IBP South Africa conducted a community monitoring exercise in which we compared the information in the water schedule with the experiences of the residents in the settlements

2. KEY FINDINGS

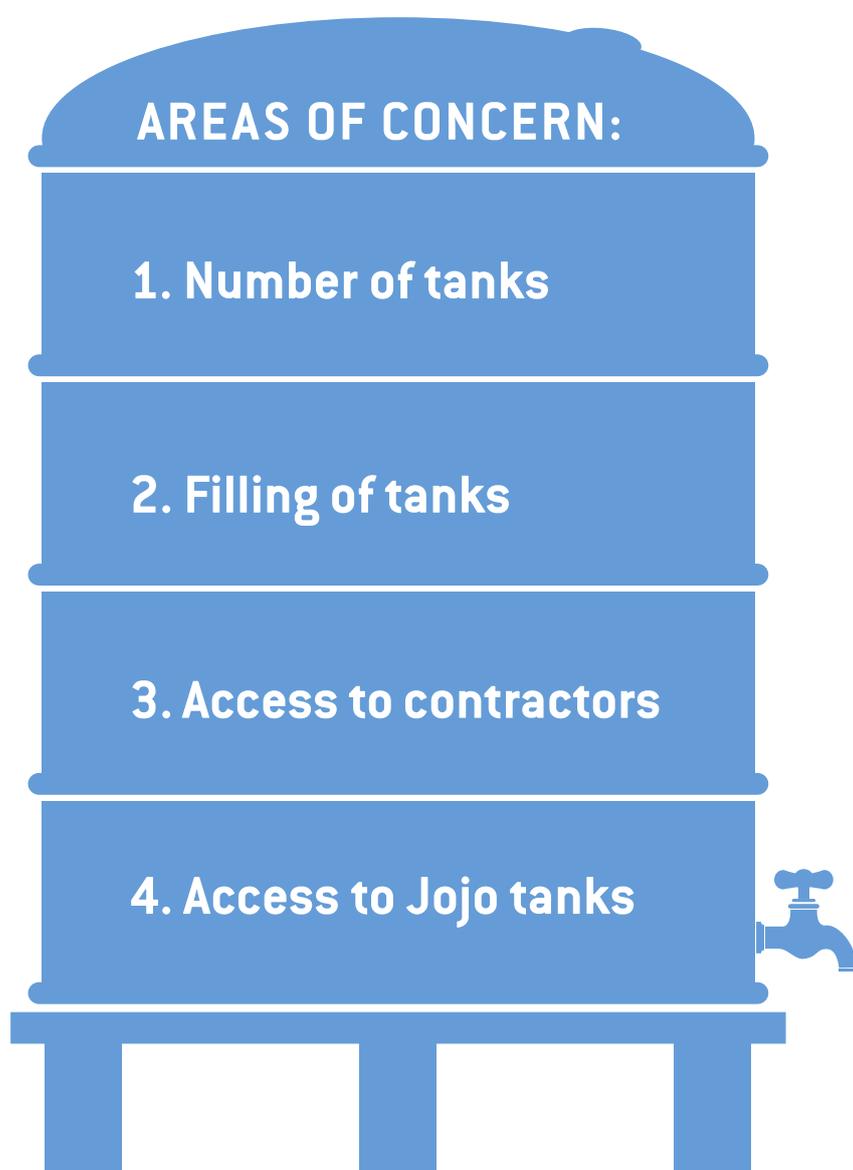
Our key findings showed four main areas of concern.

Firstly, in almost all settlements there were discrepancies between the number of tanks which were identified in the municipal schedule and the number identified by means of community evidence.

Secondly, when asked about the frequency of their access to water, many residents reported that their tanks were not filled as regularly as the schedule indicates.

Thirdly, a large number of residents stated that they do not have access to information about the respective contractors in their settlements.

And **finally**, residents from the Vandyks-drift settlements (including Somgodla) are the worst affected, since most residents in these settlements do not have access to municipal-provided Jojo tanks.





3. OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

The exercise has resulted in us coming up with **seven key recommendations** for improvements in the provision of water to informal settlements.

1. Emalahleni Local Municipality must provide the Vandyksdrift communities with Jojo tanks.
2. It has to ensure that each informal settlement's number of Jojo tanks is the same as that which is indicated in the schedule.
3. Water must be delivered according to what is outlined in the schedule.
4. It is imperative that all residents without Jojo tanks be provided with them.
5. Residents should be provided with contractor information.
6. The municipality must consult the community on
 - (1) the number of tanks needed,
 - (2) where these tanks should be placed and
 - (3) how often water should be delivered to make sure that all residents have adequate access to water daily.
7. The municipality should give the communities the updated water schedule, if it exists, and up-to-date details of the contractor responsible for delivering water to their Jojo tanks.



Method and locations of our exercise

Our exercise targeted eight informal settlements covered by the Asivikelane campaign. Many informal settlements in the Emalahleni Local Municipality receive basic water from water tankers. These tankers fill up Jojo tanks which the municipality has installed. The Emalahleni Local Municipality's "Schedule for Water Supply Through Water Tankers" shows how much water should be delivered to each settlement and how often. Our present report compares the information in this schedule with residents' experiences of delivery on the ground. We focus on the schedule and the actual delivery of water to the following informal settlements which have been a part of the Asivikelane campaign:¹ Coronation, Spring Valley, Masakhane, Benicon, El Paso, Somgodla, Five Shaft, Jooma Farm, Magagula and Mkataneni. Of these, five – namely, Somgodla, Five Shaft, Jooma Farm, Magagula and Mkataneni – are settlements within the bigger Vandyksdrift (also called Vandyks) area. Only Somgodla is listed separately in the delivery schedule. The schedule shows information for Vandyksdrift which we have used to assess the delivery of services in the other settlements in the Vandyksdrift area.

DETAILS ABOUT OUR KEY FINDINGS

1. Discrepancies with regard to the numbers and sizes of Jojo tanks provided

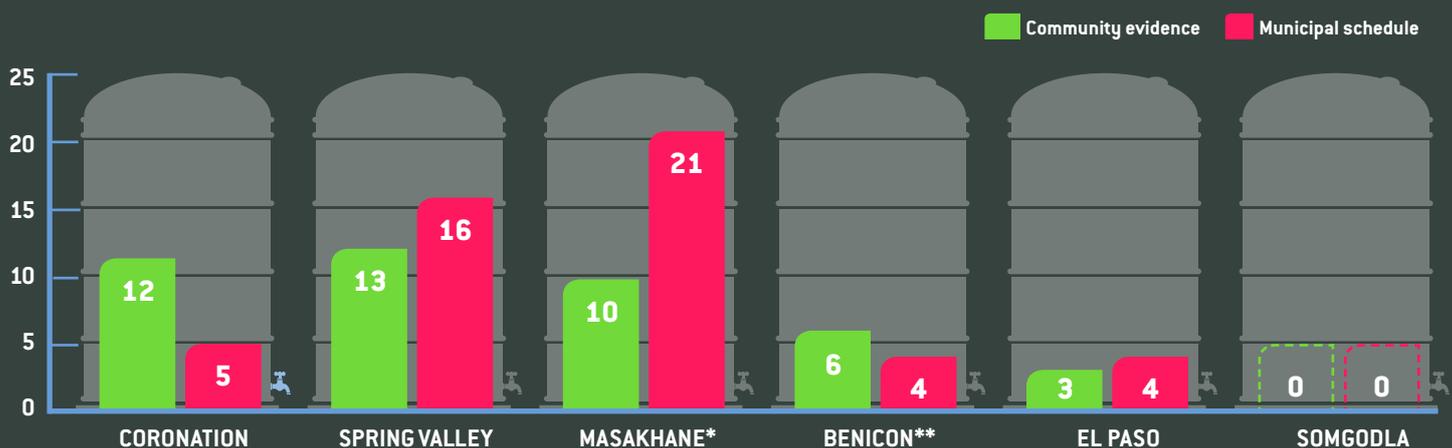
Numbers

In almost all settlements, the number of tanks reported by residents differed from the number in the "Schedule for Water Supply Through Water Tankers". Furthermore, in most cases, the reported tank sizes were smaller than what was indicated in the municipality's schedule.

In Spring Valley (ward 18), Masakhane (ward 19) and El Paso (ward 19), residents reported that there are fewer tanks than the number listed in the municipality's schedule. In Coronation (ward 15), the residents reported that there were 7 more tanks in the settlement than indicated in the municipal schedule. Benicon (ward 19) residents stated that they received two more Jojo tanks than shown in the schedule. However, not all the tanks were municipal provided. Residents highlighted that three Jojo tanks are filled by a water truck, another is filled by a borehole which was donated by Total South Africa, and the other two tanks are filled by another borehole which is in the settlement.

In Vandyksdrift, the municipal schedule reflects that there are 4 Jojo tanks (5 000L) which are filled on Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays. However, this information counters the community evidence we collected which shows that there is only one Jojo tank in the Mkataneni settlement (the only Vandyks settlement where residents reported having a tank) and that tank is filled once a week. In the case of Somgodla, the municipal schedule shows that residents collect water from tanks and fill their buckets, but this was countered by community evidence which shows that the water they use is supplied by Anglo American mine.

Number of Jojo tanks: community evidence vs municipal schedule



*Estimate of the number of tanks, according to community evidence. ** This is a total of municipal- and privately-provided tanks.

Sizes

The municipality’s water schedule also included the size of the Jojo tanks. We asked residents to provide us with information on the actual tank sizes which are currently available in their settlement.

In Spring Valley (ward 18) and Benicon (ward 19), residents reported that their Jojo tank sizes are 5 000L, which matches the sizes that the municipality indicated in their schedule. However, tank sizes in Masakhane (ward 19) and El Paso (ward 19) are smaller than shown in the schedule. In Coronation (ward 15), residents stated that, in addition to the 5 000L tanks (which were identified in the municipal schedule), they also have 2 500L tanks which are not accounted for in the municipal schedule. Moreover, residents from Masakhane (ward 19) have very limited access to water because they received fewer tanks than the schedule shows and the capacity of these tanks is almost half of what is stated in the schedule.

	Coronation	Masakhane	El Paso	Spring Valley	Benicon
Community evidence	2 500L & 5 000L	2 500L & 5 000L	2 500L	5 000L	5 000L
Municipal schedule	5 000L	10 000L & 5 000L	5 000L	5 000L	5 000L

2. Filling of Jojo tanks

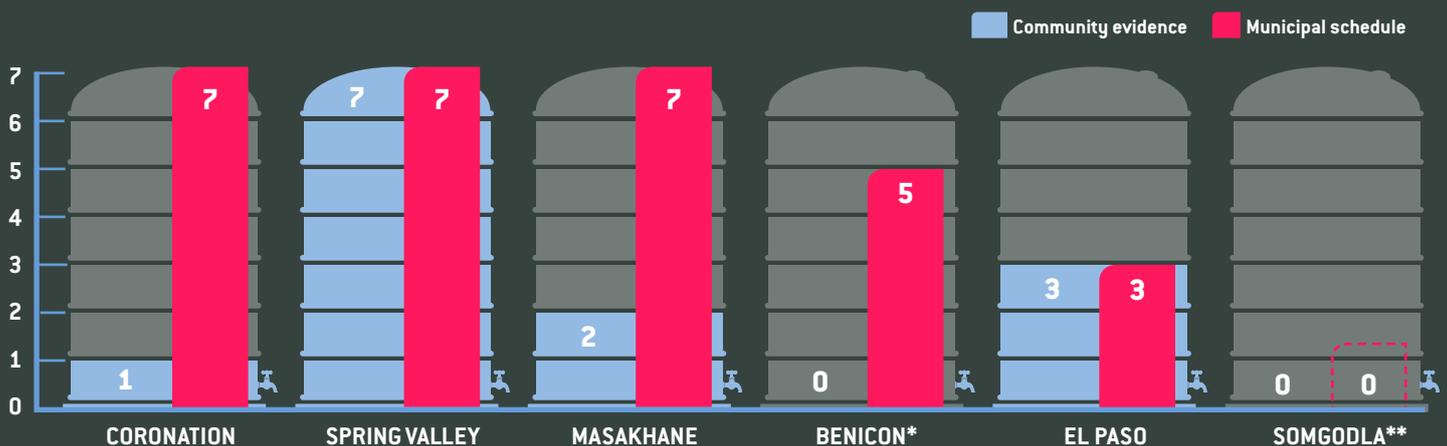
The municipality’s water schedule provides an outline of the number of times Jojo tanks are filled per week. Unfortunately, when this information was compared with the evidence provided by community members, we found that tanks were filled fewer times than the schedule stipulates.

While the community evidence from Spring Valley and El Paso confirmed that the frequency of the filling of Jojo tanks was as outlined in the water schedule, the overall supply of water in both communities is inadequate, because when compared to the number of Jojo tanks which the municipality states are in each settlement, residents from Spring Valley and El Paso reported that they received 3 less tanks and one less tank respectively.

In Coronation (ward 15) and Masakhane (ward 19), residents reported that their tanks are filled fewer times than indicated in the municipality’s water schedule. In Benicon (ward 19) they have not had any water for two weeks, which is well below the municipality’s plans to refill the tank 5 days a week. Despite the municipal schedule indicating that residents from Somgodla collect water from a tank and fill their buckets on Tuesdays and Sundays, residents reported that they only receive water supplied by Anglo American mine.

All the residents highlighted that they are not provided with buckets when the water truck delivers water to their settlements; they are compelled to use their own buckets.

Weekly filling of Jojo tanks: community evidence vs municipal schedule



*Residents were unsure about how often Jojo tanks are filled ** No Jojo tanks in settlement *** No responses from residents

3. Contractor information

When asked about their access to information about the Jojo tank contractor in their settlement, residents from most informal settlements did not have any knowledge about contractors responsible for the delivery of water. Residents from Coronation (ward 15), Spring Valley (ward 18), Masakhane (ward 19) and El Paso (ward 19) do not have any knowledge of which contractor is responsible for Jojo tanks in their settlement. On the other hand, residents from Benicon (ward 19) were able to identify Ramotila Construction as being responsible for Jojo tanks in their settlement. They also indicated that this contractor worked for 3 months without payment.

4. Limited access to municipal-provided Jojo tanks in Vandyksdrift Settlements

Residents from Jooma Farm were the only residents (out of all five informal settlements) who have some knowledge about the contractor responsible for Jojo tanks in their settlement (Mr. Mahlangu). All the residents from Jooma Farm (ward 32) and Five Shaft (ward 32) in Vandyksdrift indicated that they bring their own buckets to collect water from the truck. Residents from Makatanag (ward 32) stated that the contractor in their settlement only comes to the settlement to fill the Jojo tank and then the truck leaves with the surplus water.

	Jooma Farm	Masakhane
Community evidence	No tanks, a water truck delivers water once a week for residents to fill their buckets.	No tanks, get water from Anglo American mine.
Municipal schedule	None	None

**Hyperlinks correct at date of publication*