



VOICES OF INFORMAL SETTLEMENT RESIDENTS DURING THE COVID-19 CRISIS

Recommendations to Msunduzi Municipality's Human Settlements Department 18 May 2021

Thank you for the opportunity to make recommendations and inputs. Having reviewed the “Presentation for War Room meeting” on Msunduzi’s Human Settlements Plans, the Asivikelane campaign wishes to make the following asks and recommendations:

- We urge the municipality to prioritise providing safe and reliable access to interim water, sanitation and solid waste removal in informal settlements.
- In this regard, we ask that Msunduzi share its plans to address basic services shortages in informal settlement while residents wait for complete upgrading or formal housing.
- We request a detailed breakdown of all aspects of the informal settlements upgrading programme mentioned in the presentation.
- We request further information about what falls under each of the housing programmes mentioned – what exactly will be delivered, where and by when.
- We would also like to know how far feasibility study is for the housing project in Masson – a community that is part of the Asivikelane campaign.
- We ask that the municipality provide details of the service sites programme, including what it entails and which informal settlements in the wards referred to will benefit from this.

The above recommendations, in particular our ask for interim services, are based on the data collected from communities through the Asivikelane campaign which shows a severe lack of services. We highlight this below and also give detailed comments on the presentation in the remainder of this document.

Asivikelane – voices of informal settlements show major service shortages in Msunduzi

IBP South Africa together with Community Organisations Resource Centre (CORC) conduct a monthly monitoring of basic services in informal settlements across metro and non-municipalities, including Msunduzi Municipality. This initiative is called the *Asivikelane* campaign and it is driven by informal settlement residents who tell us about their access to water, sanitation and solid waste services.¹

Using the data, we report results per municipality using a traffic light where red represents poor delivery, in that 60% or less respondents showed that they received services in their settlements in a given data collection period. Dark orange indicates that between 60% to 75% received services, light orange represents between 75% to 90%, while green indicates that 90% and above received services.

¹ <https://asivikelane.org/>

Over the last three months (Feb-April 2021), the Asivikelane data for Msunduzi shows that many residents remain without adequate access to these services, and the municipality’s results have remained within the red margins:

Msunduzi Municipality Traffic Lights (Asivikelane results 14 to 16 : Feb – April 2021))

% residents who responded ‘yes’	Was there enough water in your settlements in the last 7 days?	Were toilets drained/cleaned in the last 7 days?	Was waste collected in the last 7 days?
Results: Feb 2021	49%	2%	18%
Results: March 2021	23%	0%	30%
Results: April 2021	32%	0%	14%

Water shortages are serious but solvable

Only between 23% and 49% of residents indicated that they had sufficient access to water during that period. The main reasons for this include:

- A shortage of taps, with some settlements only depending on one tap for the entire community
- Broken taps which are not repaired for an extended period of time.
- Where residents rely on water trucks, the delivery of water is irregular, and in some cases, residents did not receive water for several days.

We recommend that Msunduzi Municipality install additional taps across informal settlements and repair broken taps to ensure safe and regular water supply.

There is an urgent need for more toilets and regular cleaning

With regard to sanitation services, there is a severe shortage of toilets. The majority of residents use self-dug pits, which are unhygienic and unsafe to use. Residents have raised concerns that these pits are dangerous for use by children and they’re inadequate to curb the spread of Covid-19.

We recommend that Msunduzi Municipality provide toilets to informal settlements and ensure that these are cleaned/drained on a regular basis.

Unsafe waste removal poses a major risk

A waste removal service is not provided in the majority of the participating settlements. An average of nearly 80% of residents over the three months said that they often have to burn their waste because it is not collected. This poses an obvious hazard to these residents and the settlement as a whole.

We recommend that Msunduzi Municipality offers a safe waste removal service to informal settlements.

In making the above recommendations, we urge the municipality to engage and include informal settlement residents when planning the delivery of new services or doing repairs to existing services.

Specific comments on the “Presentation for Warm Room meeting” on Human Settlements

It is against the backdrop of Asivikelane’s findings that we make detailed comments on the presentation to the war room by the department of human settlements in the municipality. While the plans shared by the municipality are welcomed, the presentation is short on detail which is critical to truly evaluate the plans for housing delivery and upgrading informal settlements.

Only one Asivikelane informal settlement is part of the municipality’s housing projects listed in the planning phase - **Masson**. Specifically, Masson is in the feasibility phase. The only information provided for Masson is that the estimated yield of the project will be 570, but is unclear to what extent this number is sufficient to respond to the need for housing in this community.

Service delivery issues in Masson community

We ask that the municipality note the specific service delivery issues in Masson before the housing project comes to fruition. According to the latest data in Asivikelane (April-May 2021) , all residents indicate the following access to services:

- they use standpipes for water but the current supply is insufficient,
- there are no toilets – residents use self-dug pits for sanitation and
- there is absolutely no refuse removal provided in their settlements.

It is clear that Masson residents require more communal standpipes, as well as repairs to broken taps. There is also a pressing need for more toilets and a safe waste disposal service.

We recommend that the human settlements department, together with other relevant departments, find a way to get services to the residents of Masson while these feasibility studies are being conducted.

Provide more detailed information on plans per ward

While Masson is the only informal settlement in which Asivikelane works on the list, it is important to note that all 13 settlements in which we work face the same service delivery issues:

Services by Asivikelane informal settlements in Msunduzi

Ward	Informal Settlement	Water type	Sanitation Type	Refuse removal
30	Comment Place	Water Tank	Self Dug Pit	None
28	Crest Place	Communal tap	Self Dug Pit	None
29	Kashorty	Communal tap	Self Dug Pit	None
28	Khan Road	Communal Tap	Self Dug Pit	None
34	Marryvale	Communal Tap	Self Dug Pit	None
29	Masson	Communal Tap	Self Dug Pit	None
31	Nhlalakahle	Communal Tap and Own Tap	Self Dug Pit	None
28	Nkululekho	Communal Tap	Self Dug Pit	None
30	Parkview	Communal Tap	Self Dug Pit	None
28	Shamrock	Communal Tap	Self Dug Pit	Yes
30	Spring Vale	Communal Tap	Self Dug Pit	None
29	Swapo B	Communal Tap	Self Dug Pit	None

32	Wayside	Own Tap	Flush Toilet and Self Dug Pit	None
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One of the projects we are excited about in the presentation, is the service sites programme alternatively referred to as urban regeneration. The work according to the presentation will be done in wards 25, 28, 33, 34 and 37.

As can be seen above, Shamrock, Khan Road and Crest Place all fall within ward 28, while Marryvale falls under ward 34. It will be really helpful if the municipality shared exactly which informal settlements in the wards will be targeted for this, or alternatively indicate whether all informal settlements in the ward will benefit from this.

We recommend that the municipality make more detailed information available about its housing and site and service plans.

Provide more insight into implementation of the Informal settlements Upgrade Programme

Here the presentation gives even less detail than in the housing development programmes. While presentation states that the Department of Human Settlements has received a request for the provision of basic services in 22 informal settlements, it does not indicate which settlements will benefit from this. It merely states that the department has initiated process to appoint services providers to assist in this regard. The upgrading programme also includes 21 settlements requiring relocation and interim services and 42 informal settlements with upgrading plans.

We ask that the municipality provide a breakdown of the informal settlements upgrading programme mentioned in the presentation.

Contact information for further engagement

We are keen to engage further with the municipality on the issues raised above. Our contact information:

Name: Chumile Sali

Organisation: International Budget Partnership

Email: csali@internationalbudget.org

Contact number: 0738131728