Nelson Mandela Bay's traffic lights for water, toilet cleaning and refuse removal in informal settlements have been red since the start of the year. The severe drought makes it worse, especially the access to water.

But look more closely, and you might see some green shoots of service delivery improvement starting to sprout. Roads were tarred, water tanks installed and electricity provided. Officials have also been extraordinarily open to discussing the service delivery challenges and the metro has announced ambitious new plans to upgrade informal settlements.

We sincerely hope that when the Council approves its 2021/2022 budget, it includes the changes that are necessary to water these green shoots. Budget allocations for the provision and maintenance of basic infrastructure and services to informal settlements are critical. The budget is currently devoid of such specific allocations. We also hope that the metro will develop comprehensive service standards for the provision of dignified basic services to informal settlements.

Changes in the percentages might in part reflect the increase in the number of residents responding from 48 in Asivikelane #14 to 175 in Asivikelane #17.
Access to Water

In all four rounds, most residents said that they do not have access to enough water in their settlements. The worst affected settlements are Bethelsdorp, Norongo, Mandela Village, Westville (A Section), Moeggesukkel, Kwa Noxolo, Joe Slovo Extension, KGS (Kiva, Gqabi, Sonto), Area 11 Gunguluza, Kwalanga (Lawu), Bayland (Dameni) and Siya Kolisi Village. More specifically:

 Residents from Joe Slovo Extension have been saying since February that there is no water in their settlement.

 Residents from Govan Mbeki Village, Westville (Section A) and Siya Kolisi Village have also been saying since February that they do not have enough taps in their settlements.

 Water outages have been reported by residents from Area 11 Gunguluza and the KGS (Kiva, Gqabi, Sonto) settlement since the beginning of the year.

 The maintenance of taps is a recurring problem, with broken and/or leaking taps reported, but not fixed, since February in Moeggesukkel, Westville (Sections A and F) and KGS.

Sanitation

About two-thirds of residents have been saying since the beginning of the year that their toilets were not cleaned. The worst affected settlements are Bethelsdorp, Mandela Village, Vastrap (Ninoxolo), Moeggesukkel, Kwa Noxolo (Midrand), Haven, Nkandla, Joe Slovo Extension, Mhlolokotshane (Benoni), Mhlolokotshane Area 11 Gunguluza, Lawu Phase 6 (Kwalanga), Bayland (Dameni), Bayland West and Siya Kolisi Village. More specifically:

 Residents from Area 11 Gunguluza, Haven, Midrand and Siya Kolisi Village have been reporting since February that they do not have access to toilets.

 Residents in Govan Mbeki Village, Westville (Sections A and F), Haven, Nkandla and Area 11 Gunguluza have also been reporting over the last few rounds of Asivikelane that there are not enough toilets in their settlements.

 The maintenance of broken and (or) blocked toilets in Kwalanga (Lawu) has been a recurring problem since April.

Waste collection

Waste collection is an even bigger challenge. Over the last four rounds of Asivikelane, 90% or more of residents reported that their waste was not removed during the last 7 days. The affected settlements include: Bethelsdorp (Norongo), Mandela Village (Norongo), Vastrap (Ninoxolo), Govern Mbeki Village, Westville, Bethelsdorp (Extension 36), Moeggesukkel, Kwa Noxolo (Midrand), Joe Slovo Extension, Haven, Mhlolokotshane, Nkandla, KGS, Area 11 Gunguluza, Kwalanga (Lawu), Bayland (Dameni), Bayland West and (Siya Kolisi Village). More specifically:

 Residents from Haven, Nkandla, Area 11 Gunguluza and Bayland have reported since February that the metro does not provide them with refuse bags.

 Residents from Area 11 Gunguluza, Haven, Siya Kolisi Village, Govan Mbeki Village, Nkandla, KGS, Bayland, Joe Slovo Extension and Mhlolokotshane have reported that the metro does not provide any waste removal services in their settlements.

GOOD NEWS from Asivikelane #17

- Water tanks were installed in Nelson Mandela Bay’s Area 11 Gunguluza.
- Electricity installation is in process in Area 11 Gunguluza, Westville (Sections A and D) and Sisulu Village.
- The tarring of Bantom Road in Area 11 Gunguluza is ongoing.

DATA NOTES: 175 residents from 19 settlements in Nelson Mandela Bay responded during Asivikelane #17. Detailed results & comments from residents available at www.asivikelane.org. For more information contact: infosa@internationalbudget.org. Across social media on: @Asivikelane