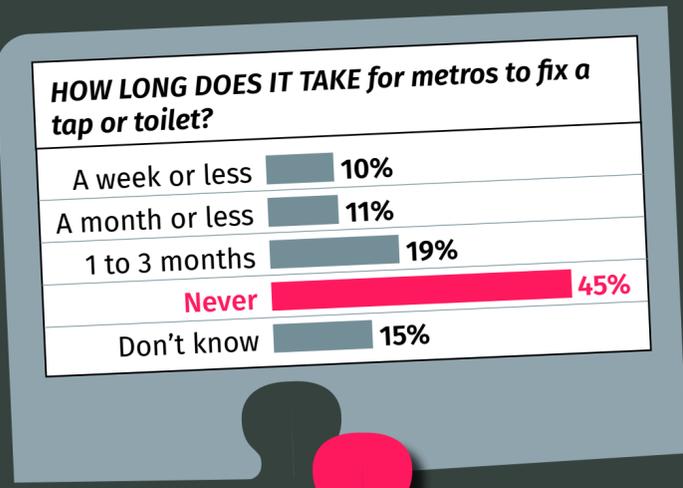


The maintenance puzzle

One might expect that cash-strapped metros would maintain communal taps and toilets to avoid buying new ones. But evidence collected by Asivikelane shows that metros usually do not maintain taps and toilets in informal settlements. And when they do, the process is extremely slow, leaving residents without access to water and ablution facilities – sometimes indefinitely. 45% of residents say that when a tap or toilet breaks, they are never fixed. Another 30% say that it takes longer than a week for maintenance to happen. We don't yet know why. But here are some elements of the puzzle.



Maintenance doesn't help if there are no taps and toilets to start with

As Asivikelane has been reporting, many informal settlements across the country do not have access to taps and toilets at all. Any improvement of maintenance should be supplemented by installation of more taps and toilets. Some metros, like Johannesburg appear to be doing well with regard to maintenance. But, looking closely, one realizes that it is because many or most residents don't have taps and toilets in the first place.

	 % of residents WITHOUT TAPS	 % of residents WITHOUT TOILETS
Cape Town	14%	7%
Buffalo City	12%	10%
Ekurhuleni	6%	10%
eThekweni	13%	26%
Johannesburg	40%	12%
Nelson Mandela Bay	23%	55%

What is wrong with taps and toilets?

Officials often blame broken taps and toilets on residents' vandalism. This may be the reason in some cases, but the table shows that there are other reasons for maintenance. Taps and toilets often also break because they are of poor quality and are used by many people. We will collect more detailed information for future releases about why taps and toilets need repairs and maintenance.

What residents say is WRONG with taps

Damaged	19%
Leaking	48%
Low water pressure	26%
Not working at all	7%

All the local municipalities and metros do badly

Some metros target a 48-hour response time for fixing faulty taps and toilets. The results suggest they are falling far short of this.

% of residents who say that the municipality FIXES a broken tap or toilet WITHIN A WEEK

Buffalo City	2%	Tshwane	26%
Cape Town	2%	Dr Pixley ka Isaka Seme	0%
Ekurhuleni	19%	Emalahleni	0%
eThekweni	6%	Emfuleni	0%
Johannesburg	31%	Madibeng	24%
Mangaung	0%	Msunduzi	0%
NMB	0%		

Why are metros not maintaining taps and toilets?

- Initial research shows the following possible reasons for this:
- **More people use these taps and toilets than municipalities realize.** Therefore, they also need **more maintenance than municipalities realize.**
 - **No routine maintenance.** Taps and toilets are fixed only when they break.
 - **Fault reporting systems do not serve informal settlements.** These systems often depend on access to airtime, a smart phone or erf and account numbers. This means that informal settlements are largely excluded from accessing them.
 - **Slow and inefficient procurement of outsourced maintenance.**
 - **Contractors often don't do what they are paid to do.** And metros do not monitor the work of contractors.
 - **Insufficient budget allocations for repairs and maintenance.**

Communities can help

In some municipalities like eThekweni, Mossel Bay and Cape Town, community members do some of the basic routine maintenance themselves. Could the Expanded Public Works Programme and Community Work Programme or other programmes be used to scale this up?

DATA NOTES: 1201 residents from 227 settlements responded over the last week. Residents from Umngeni Local Municipality have also started to participate in Asivikelane. Detailed results & comments from residents themselves are available at asivikelane.org/releases. For more information contact: infos@internationalbudget.org Across social media on: [@Asivikelane](https://www.facebook.com/Asivikelane)