



# ASIVIKELANE

LET'S PROTECT ONE ANOTHER

VOICES OF INFORMAL  
SETTLEMENT RESIDENTS  
ABOUT BASIC SERVICES



## Submission to Buffalo City Metro Municipality 2022/2023 Draft Budget

Date: 29 April 2022

Submitted by: AfeSis-Corplan as part of the Asivikelane Campaign  
representing informal settlements communities in Buffalo City Metro Municipality.

Contact details: Vusumzi Gqomose, | Tel: 043 743 3830, | Email: vusi@afesis.org.za

### 1. Key recommendations on the draft 2022/23 budget made by the Asivikelane Campaign, AfeSis-Corplan and International Budget Partnership (IBP) South Africa:

Based on our analysis of the 2022/23 draft budget and draft Integrated Development Plan (IDP), we would like to make the following recommendations:

- Allocate enough to eradicate the sanitation backlog in the metro and ensure that all residents have access to municipally provided sanitation.
- Allocate enough to eradicate the water backlog in the metro to ensure all informal settlements have access to formal piped water closer than 200m from their dwellings.
- Increase the total budget allocation for repairs and maintenance to align it with the prescribed guidelines provided by the National Treasury.
- Show how much is budgeted specifically for repairs and maintenance in informal settlements and make sure that such allocation is spent in full.

- Have a dedicated budget item for refuse collection in informal settlements because there are significant health risks posed by the growing backlog of refuse removal.
- Increase the budget allocation for streetlights and high-mast lighting to make informal settlements safer.
- Show clearly which settlements will benefit from new services and how many such new services will be provided in each settlement and when.
- Provide a detailed plan on informal settlement upgrading and show exactly what the metro plans to deliver, as well as where and when in terms of the different budget items.

## **Who are we?**

The Asivikelane campaign monitors basic service delivery in informal settlements and amplifies the voices of residents who share their lived experience and speak out about what they need from the government to improve their access to services such as water, sanitation and refuse removal. The Asivikelane campaign is an initiative of the International Budget Partnership South Africa (IBP South Africa), and Afesis-Corplan is its partner in Buffalo City. Afesis-Corplan is a progressive non-governmental organisation (NGO) which contributes to community-driven development and good local governance in the Eastern Cape. IBP South Africa is an NGO whose goal is to build the ability of poor people to engage in government budgets.

## **2. Service delivery challenges in Buffalo City**

Evidence collected by the Asivikelane campaign shows that residents living in informal settlements in the Buffalo City Metropolitan Municipality face several service delivery challenges.

Over the past year residents have indicated that access to water, cleaning of toilets and provision of refuse removal services have deteriorated in Buffalo City; however there has been some improvement between February and April this year.

### ***2.1 Inadequate access to sanitation***

Asivikelane residents have flagged many challenges with regard to access to sanitation in Buffalo City. The most common challenges associated with toilets are that they are blocked or broken. There are also not enough of them, with large numbers of residents having to share one toilet, and some residents not having any access at all.

Another major challenge is that toilets are not regularly cleaned by the municipality. More than 80% of residents use communal flush toilets in Buffalo City and the municipality is responsible for ensuring that the toilets are cleaned and maintained. However, in February 2022 only 35,4% of residents said that their toilet had been cleaned over the past 7 days.

As per data provided by the City in the draft 2022/23 Integrated Development Plan, the sanitation backlog was still significant in 2020. Moreover, according to the 2020 statistics, more than 15 000 households still used pit toilets, more than 1 300 households still used the bucket system, and more than 6 800 households still had no toilets. The statistics provided include households in both formal and informal settlements, and it is therefore not possible to know exactly how many are in informal settlements. However, the statistics are in line with trends identified in data collected by Asivikelane which show that some residents in informal settlements still use pit toilets or have no toilets at all.

## ***2.2 Water provision in informal settlements***

There are several key challenges related to water provision in Buffalo City. Most critical is a lack of repairs and maintenance, as well as residents simply not having enough water.

The metro has indicated in the draft IDP that the water backlog remains a major problem. The IDP states that in 2020, out of all the households in the metro almost 17 000 had access to a standpipe further than 200m from their dwelling, which is below the minimum standard in the metro. More than 5 800 households did not have access to any piped water, which echoes the evidence gathered by residents participating in Asivikelane.

In April 2022 almost 30% of residents said that they did not have access to enough water. Residents flagged the following recurring issues: not enough taps, broken taps, low water

pressure, and taps being too far from some residents' homes. There have also been water outages in the metro.

Almost 80% of residents surveyed in April use communal taps and are therefore heavily reliant on the municipality to ensure that there are enough taps and that these taps are maintained and repaired when they are broken.

### **2.3 Waste removal services**

In April 2022 only 43,4% of residents said that their waste had been removed in the previous 7 days.

The main issues with waste removal are that the metro does not provide waste removal services in some areas and that residents do not receive refuse bags, which makes it difficult for them to dispose of their waste. As a result, residents often resort to burning their waste, causing air pollution that poses several health risks.

### **2.4 Public lighting in informal settlements**

Another critical issue for informal settlement residents is lack of access to electricity and inadequate lighting in their settlements. In August 2021, 81% of residents said they had inadequate access to public lighting. This was one of the key reasons why residents felt unsafe using communal toilets in their settlements.

### **2.5 Inadequate repairs and maintenance**

Many of the services that the metro provides are ineffective because when they break the metro does not fix them.

The most critical finding about repairs and maintenance is that 18% of residents said in March this year that a broken tap, toilet or water tank was *never* fixed when it was reported. Another 59% said that repairs took between one week and three months – leaving residents without services for extended periods of time.

### 3. Evidence from the 2022/23 draft budget: where should the metro make adjustments?

Based on these service delivery issues, highlighted by the Asivikelane campaign and metro’s own data, we have focused in this analysis on the allocations in the metro’s draft budget for water, sanitation, electricity, refuse removal and informal settlement upgrading. While we welcome that the municipality has increased the budget allocations for informal settlement service delivery, our analysis below suggests that it might not be enough to eradicate the service delivery backlogs.

#### 3.1 Budget allocation for sanitation

It does not seem likely that the current budget will provide sufficient sanitation for the 15 000 households still using pit toilets, 1 300 households using the bucket system, and 6 800 households with no sanitation services all.

The Infrastructure Services Directorate has a capital project under its section for wastewater for sanitation facilities in informal settlements. The draft 2022/23 budget sets it out as one of the largest capital projects in the sanitation services. The draft budget indicates that the item provides for the “provision of waterborne ablution facilities in informal settlements in urban areas”. This means that this project provides communal ablution blocks in Buffalo City’s informal settlements.

The budget for this programme has increased by 25% from what was provided in the 2021/22 draft budget.

<b>Programme</b>	<b>2021/22 draft capital budget</b>	<b>2022/23 draft capital budget</b>	<b>2023/24 draft capital budget</b>	<b>2024/25 draft capital budget</b>
Sanitation facilities in	R8 million	R10 million	R0	R10 million

informal settlements				
----------------------	--	--	--	--

This increase is welcomed, but the budget does not provide targets for how many additional households will have access to communal toilets. It also does not state by when these improvements will be implemented, nor does it provide a list of settlements which will benefit from these sanitation facilities , merely stating that the whole metro will benefit.

It is, therefore, unclear as to how far this allocation will go to eradicate the sanitation backlog in informal settlements in the coming financial year. But the numbers cited in the IDP make the above budget look like it will fall far short. The three budgets of R28 million indicate a projected cost of only R121 per household for the over 23 000 households that have no or insufficient sanitation. While the budget does not present detailed unit costs, this looks insufficient at face value.

The budget also does not show how much is budgeted for cleaning of existing communal toilets, and it is therefore impossible to know whether enough funds have been set aside for this. Asiviklane data, however, suggests that current services, and the budgets that pay for them, are largely insufficient.

### **3.2 Budget allocations for water**

The overall budget allocation for projects that will improve access to water in informal settlements has increased between the 2021/22 and 2022/23 financial years. Again, the budget does not specifically indicate what these projects will deliver, apart from that it is for water supply infrastructure for distribution. It is therefore unclear whether these projects will specifically provide more communal taps to informal settlements.

Again, the R86,6 million indicated in the budget seems too little to provide access to water to the 5 800 households with no water and the 17 000 that have substandard water.

<b>Programme</b>	<b>Draft capital budget 2021/22</b>	<b>Draft 2022/23 budget</b>	<b>Draft 2023/24 budget</b>	<b>Draft 2024/25 budget</b>
Water mains-- informal settlements inland	R5 million	R1 million	R10 million	R10 million
Water Supply -- informal settlements coastal	R3 million	R15 million	R6,4 million	R8 million
Distribution mains -- informal settlements midlands	R5 million	R3 million	R9 million	R9 million

The metro also does not show in either the budget or the draft IDP which settlements will benefit from these budget allocations, or when these services will be provided.

### **3.3 Budget allocations for refuse removal**

The Buffalo City budget does not say what it spends on refuse removal in informal settlements, which suggests that there might be no dedicated budget for refuse removal in informal settlements.

The metro should specifically budget for this, as evidence from the Asivikelane campaign shows that most residents do not have access to waste removal services. This fact is echoed by the city's own data, which shows that the refuse removal backlog has increased over the past decade.

The metro should also budget enough to ensure that residents receive plastic bags to dispose of their waste.

### **3.4 Budget allocations for electrification**

Analysis shows that the budget for the electrification of informal areas has more than doubled from what it was in the 2021/22 financial year to R25 million in the 2022/23 financial year. A total of R101 million has been budgeted over three years.

<b>Programme</b>	<b>2021/22 draft capital budget</b>	<b>2022/23 draft capital budget</b>	<b>2023/24 draft capital budget</b>	<b>2024/25 draft capital budget</b>
Electrification -- informal dwelling areas	R10 million	R25 million	R30 million	R36 million

The increase in the budget is welcomed and the metro should work with speed to ensure that all residents in informal settlements have access to electricity.

Another critical issue in informal settlements is public lighting. There is one programme for streetlights and high-masts which is set to benefit informal settlement residents. The name of the programme doesn't specify that it is for informal settlements, but the funding source is the Informal Settlement Partnership Upgrading Grant which we know can only be spent on service delivery in informal settlements. The three-year budget of R15 million will likely not be a sufficient response to the 81% of residents who say that their areas are not sufficiently lit, but it is a good start.

<b>Programme</b>	<b>Draft 2021/22 capital budget</b>	<b>Draft 2022/23 capital budget</b>	<b>Draft 2023/24 capital budget</b>	<b>Draft 2024/25 capital budget</b>
Streetlights and "highasts" [sic]	R5 million	R5 million	R5 million	R0

One of the key issues with both projects is that the draft budget and the draft IDP does not show which settlements will benefit and what will be delivered this coming financial year. It also does not indicate what happens if an informal settlement has not gone through the

Standard Operating Procedures (SOP), which includes de-densification, reblocking and relocation. This process is a requirement for a settlement to be eligible for interim electricity.

The metro should ensure that the budget allocation is sufficient to make sure that informal settlements have adequate public lighting. This is particularly important given the safety concerns raised by residents when there is no public lighting.

### **3.5. Repairs and maintenance in informal settlements**

The evidence collected by Asivikelane shows exactly why repairs and maintenance are so important in the metro. Without repairs and maintenance being conducted on infrastructure in informal settlements, some residents can be denied their access to services, even though the services have been installed and should be available. Despite the importance of repairs and maintenance, the metro does not show in the budget how much is allocated for these purposes in informal settlements. It is impossible to see whether the overall increase in the repairs and maintenance budget, which increases by just more than 7% from R414,54 million in 2021/22 to R444,53 million in 2022/23 in Buffalo City, will benefit informal settlement residents.

The budget shows how much is budgeted for repairs and maintenance across the metro in the operating budget and gives a further breakdown of how much is spent on repairs and maintenance by asset class.

<b>Asset class</b>	<b>2021/22 adjusted budget</b>	<b>2022/23 draft budget</b>	<b>2023/24 draft budget</b>	<b>2024/25 draft budget</b>
Electrical infrastructure	R36,3 million	R36,85 million	R37,58 million	R40,59 million
Water supply infrastructure	R3,37 million	R3,32 million	R3,38 million	R3,65 million
Sanitation infrastructure	R27 million	R27,42 million	R27,96 million	R30,2 million
Solid Waste infrastructure	R1,26 million	R1,28 million	R1,31 million	R1,41 million

The breakdown per asset class also does not show any significant increase to the maintenance of infrastructure related to most basic services, while the budget for repairs and maintenance to water supply infrastructure decreases.

While the budget does increase overall, Buffalo City is still not budgeting enough for repairs and maintenance in the metro. The draft budget states that the metro has only budgeted 2% for repairs and maintenance as a percentage of Property, Plant and Equipment (PPE), which is far below the 8% of PPE that is prescribed by the National Treasury.

The metro should increase the budget allocation for repairs and maintenance to ensure that it gets closer to what is required by the National Treasury, as a lack of repairs and maintenance directly impacts the right to access to water and sanitation.

### **3.6 Informal settlement upgrading**

In the previous sections we have looked at budget allocations for service delivery in the short term, but informal settlement residents also receive services as part of the longer-term informal settlement upgrading projects.

Informal settlement upgrading falls under the Human Settlements Directorate in the metro and the budget document refers to it as a top priority for Buffalo City. The metro plans to upgrade 154 informal settlements by 2030 through the Informal Settlement Upgrading Partnership Grant, which increases slightly over the medium term.

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Informal Settlement Upgrading Partnership Grant	R266,25 million	R282,12 million	R294,55 million	R307,78 million

According to the draft 2022/23 IDP, there are currently 29 informal settlements being upgraded, with the metro providing engineering services prior to the construction of the top structures.

The human settlements capital budget lists which settlements will benefit from upgrading projects which will provide roads, stormwater, sanitation and water. However, the budget items are vague and do not explain what will be delivered on the ground and by when – making it difficult to monitor progress. Specifically, it is unclear if these households will receive permanent taps or toilets in the coming budget year.

The metro should make detailed plans available together with the budget, and show clearly what the targets are for each budget item which deals with settlement upgrading.

#### Reference list:

1. 2022/23 draft budget: <https://www.buffalocity.gov.za/folder.php?id=3FD0587>
2. 2022/23 draft Integrated Development Plan: <https://www.buffalocity.gov.za/folder.php?id=3FD0587>
3. 2021/22 draft budget and draft integrated development plan: <https://www.buffalocity.gov.za/folder.php?id=C5CB3DA>

4. Asivikelane data: <https://asivikelane.org/>
5. <https://afesis.org.za/>