

AREA COORDINATION READINESS

The Public Safety and Security Department and Urban and Rural Planning (URP) make up uMhlatuze's core team in the SPRINT Lab. URP is also responsible for implementing the *Empangeni Town Centre Revitalisation Plan (ETCRP)*, the guiding framework for work in the CBD.

Although top-down support will be crucial to ABA, a letter of endorsement for the Lab has not yet been submitted by municipal leadership. However, there is precedence for integrated and area-based governance in the city, as seen in *Operation Sukuma Sakhe (OSS)*. The *2020/2021 IDP Review* also encourages area-based, coordinated work between key actors, as it mandates the implementation of the *ETCRP*, work by the Area-based Management Programme (ABM), and grassroots-level integrated service delivery (CoU, 2020:423, 65). The *Immigration Act of 2002*, which allows Empangeni's economic development to include skilled migrants, also enables more effective work on the site (Isike, 2012:47).

In engagements with VPUU in 2020, three key members of the core uMhlatuze team demonstrated enthusiasm to drive successful implementation. They have already begun sharing resources through the ABM Programme, a practice which could be strengthened via the CDF. The core team has strong technical and managerial experience; in particular, the ABM Programme brings many required skills. Furthermore, the Lab Liaison has robust credibility, skills and networks.

At the same time, the core team expressed a need for support in area coordination. They expressed anxiety about bringing in colleagues from other "silos." They also shared challenges facing the ABM

Programme: it does not yet have a representative to drive the process within URP; its financial sustainability is limited by the line department's budget; and it is not linked to participatory IDP processes. Additionally, the team will require support in community facilitation, as there is a disconnect between local government and the community. Currently, uMhlatuze engages meaningfully with ward committees, while communication with community groups and SMMEs is top-down. More broadly, officials may benefit from training about immigration dynamics and legislation (Isike, 2012:47).

For effective implementation of the *ETCRP*, the core team must align with the following departments: City Engineering and Parks, Sport and Recreation, Economic Development Facilitation, Waste Management and Public Health (IUDS, 2013). They should also collaborate with the Zululand Chamber of Business (Olivier, 2015) and the Ward 23 Councillor, who is very experienced but constrained by political instability and negative perceptions of foreign nationals. Training on social cohesion, migration and identifying xenophobia would benefit local leaders in the partnership.

Lastly, infrastructure funding would benefit the site, as the *ETCRP* does not have implementation budget allocated.



ORGANISATIONAL READINESS: AFRISOC

The African Solidarity Campaign (AfriSoc) was established in 2019 to represent the needs of foreign nationals targeted by xenophobic attacks. Since then, they have worked within the community to address stigma towards foreigners, by facilitating social cohesion workshops and peace education and providing social assistance during COVID-19. AfriSoc also advocate for the rights of asylum seekers and refugees, educate community members on GBV and facilitate business development skills. Most of the work AfriSoc does is within the area of Richards Bay, the neighboring town of eMphangeni. However, their passion and commitment has stretched their networks throughout the City of uMhlatuze, with a contact database of all foreign nationals; greater clarity on privacy and use of this data is needed.

These networks have strong reliance and trust upon the AfriSoc Executive Director (ED), who is often asked to negotiate and mediate on behalf of either the police or foreign nationals. Much dependency is placed upon the ED to represent the issues of foreign nationals, as AfriSoc has close ties with the police and the Head of Public Safety and Security, who is also a board member and regularly donates to the organization. This may hinder accountability. In turn, the Programme Manager of the organization is a local SAPS Sergeant committed to working part-time for the organization. These key municipal stakeholders may require further training on the complex challenges faced by migrants in eMphangeni.



AfriSoc's activities are led by youth volunteers. While this is an opportunity to upskill and support local youth, it also brings a challenge, as they require capacitation to address complex social issues. The activities of the project are run from an office in Richards Bay, which is fully equipped and functioning. Organizational structures and documentation are respected and well maintained.

The passion of the ED has allowed the organization to grow to respond to the needs of foreign nationals and South Africans alike in the community, although initially the vision was to support foreign nationals. This change to aid not only foreign nationals might reflect the limited funds of the CSO, the need to build social cohesion and the pressing needs and restrictions arising from COVID-19.

AfriSoc has a broad understanding of the gaps in the communities it works in, with strong community engagement skills built upon high levels of trust and strong networks, especially within foreign national communities. However, there is limited expertise on complex social issues and potentially a conflict of interest between the agendas of SAPS, Public Safety and the AfriSoc ED.