PARTICIPATORY PLANNING AND URBAN DESIGN

The 2013 *Empangeni Town Centre Revitalisation Plan* aligns users' needs with changes to pub-lic space. The ETCRP's methodology was fairly participatory, with surveys of formal and informal businesses and commuters. The as-yet unfunded plan also aligns spatial interventions with Sus-tainable Neighbourhoods principles: it integrates public transport facilities with other active spaces, envisions safer pedestrian networks, and foresees passive surveillance along street edges. However, the ETCRP did not anticipate social interventions in these spaces, nor did it consider perspectives from taxi associations or marginalised groups.

PUBLIC SAFETY

The Public Safety and Security Department keeps eMpangeni safe through strong partnerships with private security and SAPS. Seven private security contractors mainly respond to land invasion and trading by-law enforcement, and one deploys a bicycle patrol unit to crime hotspots. The Department expressed funding deficits for CCTV operation and additional bicycle patrols; however, it may better promote safety by incentivizing Neighbourhood Watches or involving EPWP. Outside government, AfriSoc's peace-building efforts address xenophobia, while taxi drivers and informal traders work together to keep transport interchanges safe.

ACCESS TO JUSTICE

AfriSoc are currently working informally as a liaison between SAPS and foreign nationals' communities. At a community and municipal level, they informally represent the needs of foreign nationals. At a grassroots level, AfriSoc provides education on GBV and rights of foreign nationals. On the site visit, VPUU did not note any police presence. Lastly, the municipality could use assistance in its efforts to overcome xenophobia and counter social narratives which victimise marginalised foreign national groups.

PROGRAMME PLANNING, MANAGEMENT AND M&E

The strongest baseline data available about the site comes from surveys of traders and commuters, conducted for the *ETCRP*. For a more comprehensive baseline, other resources such as ward-level data must be used. In terms of programme planning, the City Development Department has strong leadership to undertake this task; however, it is a small team. Planning is also hindered by the need for a Community Action Plan (CAP) and ensuing logical framework. These must still be developed with street traders, taxi associations and other stakeholders.

INFORMATION SHARING AND MANAGEMENT

There does not appear to be ongoing or area-based information-sharing with communities on the part of the municipality, with no official communications strategy for the CBD. Existing communication is done through a top-down approach, and then only through ward committees. The IDP process did engage the Youth and Women's forums, and VPUU anticipates that this could be a foundation for future information-sharing. Additionally, efforts have been made to involve ward committees in ABM to support information-sharing.

RESEARCH AND CAPACITY-BUILDING

A significant amount of research about the site was done for the *ETCRP* by consultants in 2013; however, this could be supplemented with present-day participatory data collection and mapping. In turn, the City Development Team is aware of the Apartheid history of the town; but there is limited engagement with stakeholders on community needs. This is an opportunity for capacitation. Within civil society, skills trainings are provided to informal traders by banks and other businesses and to youth by the Zikulise Community Upliftment Project.