

asiye
etafuleni

2023-2024
**ANNUAL
REPORT**

CONTENTS

AeT at a Glance	2
Governance	3
Meet the Team	4
Year in Review	5
AeT's Medium Term Strategy	6
Strategy Diagram	7
Some Project Highlights	8
Infrastructure and Design Innovation Programme	9
• Childcare	10
• Non-motorized freight	12
• Recycling	14
• Zero Waste	16
◦ Diverting Organic Waste from Landfill	17
◦ Bokashi Pilot	18
◦ Urine Diversion	19
Advocacy & Law	20
• Law Project	21
• Spatial Guidelines	22
Change Agents	24
• Waste Champions	25
◦ A personal look into the Waste Champions	26
• Markets of Warwick and Tour Guides	27
Forecast	29
Our Funders, Partners and Collaborators	30

Asiye eTafuleni at a Glance

Asiye eTafuleni (AeT) is a small, fleet-footed, not-for-profit based in inner-city Durban. Our focus is spatial justice and sustainable livelihoods for informal workers operating in public space. Since AeT's founding in 2008, we have had multiple successes, and received global recognition. The name of the organisation reflects our approach of walking alongside street and market traders, barrow operators and waste pickers to find inclusive solutions. The AeT team has experience in working both inside and outside of government and has been able to constructively navigate the fine line between collaboration and advocacy.

The AeT office is situated in the heart of Warwick Junction. Although we are deeply immersed in this particular district, the challenges faced by informal workers in other towns and cities in South Africa and across the global south are essentially the same. Through partners such as Women in Informal Employment Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO) and Street Net International (SNI), the reach of our work and advocacy, addressing challenges faced by street and market traders everywhere, is international. Nationally, our impact is through engagement with national trader structures and government agencies such as South African Informal Traders Association (SAITA) and the South African Local Government Association (SALGA).

In the future, the informal economy will become an increasingly significant economic and livelihood strategy—whether this is embraced by governments or not. The pervasive formal-informal binary framing is problematic, defining informality as located outside, and even undermining, urban systems, whereas it is actually intrinsic to the city economy.

Climate change is another important driver. Informal work has a low climate impact, however informal workers are some of the most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. A just transition for the informal economy would recognise its positive contribution: a notably small carbon footprint, that it is localised by default, and contributes significantly to local food security. Inclusion of informal workers in planning and governance, addressing their specific climate vulnerability, and supporting improved adaptation capacity through social protection and actual business support, are important and meaningful interventions.

AeT's objective is for the urban informal economy to be pro-actively supported and to show how urban informal workers shape and should be integrated into urban systems. We are aiming for system change, rather than incremental change.

Governance

AeT is a registered not for Profit organisation with a Board comprising board members and 3 directors.

The Board is responsible for governance oversight, including financial oversight. AeT is fortunate to have Board members who are actively supportive and engaged with the organisations' activities.

The Board meets at least monthly, either as a full board or as an executive. Full board meetings are held at least 5 times a year. We are grateful for their more regular support during challenging periods, and ongoing assistance with networking and fund raising.

Board members:

Adheema Davis: academic and practising professional architect

Phume Mkhize: professional architect and urban designer

Ntombinizingi Nthshangase: informal worker leader (director and Board chair)

Glen Robbins: academic researcher and development economist (director)

Caroline Skinner: academic , informal economy specialist, and WIEGO director of Urban Policy.

The organisation founders, Richard Dobson (director) and Patrick Ndlovu also sit on the Board.

“Without Asiye eTafuleni the lives of informal workers would be much harder. We really appreciate the hard hard work and commitment of the team and the other Board members. Asiye eTafuleni really understands and responds to the challenges that informal workers face. Initiatives like the Know Your Rights campaign help us to stand up for our rights to demand a stop to police harassment, and for better infrastructure.”

(Ntombinizingi Nthshangase, Board chair)

Meet the Team

Richard Dobson



Richard, an architect by training, worked for over ten years for the eThekweni Municipality as a project leader, first of the Warwick Junction Urban Renewal Project and then for the inner city renewal programme. He left the city in 2006 to co-found Asiye eTafuleni and focus on offering design and facilitation services to those working in the informal economy. His professional technical, design and project work has been recognized through various local, national and international awards and citations and he is a recipient of the 2014 Diakonia Human Rights Award for advancing the rights of informal workers.

Patrick Ndlovu



Patrick started his 38-year career working with informal workers during his first career as a Metro Police Officer – enforcing bylaws against informal traders. He later worked as an Area Manager for the eThekweni municipality, providing administration, dispute resolution and social facilitation for traders. He left the city in 2008 to co-found Asiye eTafuleni and focus on offering community development and social facilitation services to the informal economy. Patrick's skill and experience with social facilitation and informal workers have been recognized globally, and included a period as a director on WIEGOs Board.

Joanne Lees



Jo has had over 30 years of experience as an architect, urbanist, and public housing specialist, grappling with a broad array of issues related to inclusive and integrated sustainable development and spatial transformation. Jo worked with the founders of AeT when they were still at the eThekweni Municipality, and has been an associate of Asiye eTafuleni's since their inception. She has been working more actively as part the AeT team since 2019.

Sithulisile Moyo



Sithulisile holds an LLM in Constitutional Litigation and Human Rights from the University of KwaZulu Natal. She has extensive experience practising and working in public interest and the human rights sector. She is currently pursuing her PhD studies in Labour Law. She has been working with Asiye eTafuleni since 2018, primarily managing their law programme on advancing socio-economic rights for informal workers to achieve progressive realisation of sustainable livelihoods.

Chantal Froneman



Chantal has worked in and around urban issues for more than 25 years in her work with the eThekweni Municipality and later as AeT's Administrator. Chantal first worked in eThekweni's City Police and City Health departments. She became involved with issues around urban informality and informal work through her later work on the City's iTRUMP program, in Warwick Junction. Chantal has been a core team member at AeT from its start in 2008.

Lihle Nyawo



Lihle is an informal trader in Warwick Junction. Her association with AeT began in 2016 as a Markets of Warwick tour guide, and later as an intern. Lihle is currently AeT's childcare project officer.

Priyanka Govender



Priyanka has been an intern since the beginning of 2024. She writes blogs for the website, manages social media and helps with the various ongoing within the organization. Priyanka has also undertaken a large role in making of the Annual Report.

Siyamthanda Goba



Siyamthanda is a 2nd year BSocSci.(Law, Politics and Economics) student with the University of KwaZulu Natal. His areas of interest are Human Rights advocacy and developmental economics. He is currently a research assistant in the Urban Advocacy division at AeT.

Year in Review

As Asiye eTafuleni went into 2023, some of their key multi-year projects (the Warwick Zero Waste project, the childcare project, and the law project) were all entering their final funding cycle year. This highlighted a future funding challenge and fund-raising was an important focus for the year.

With commitment from the team and support from the Board, the year ended with the successful conclusion of these projects and affirmation of the work of the organisation in the form of funding commitments for 2024 onwards.

Follow-on grant funding from the Echidna Giving Foundation to continue our childcare work for an additional 3 years; a new grant from the DG Murray Trust (DGMT) for specific design development of the childcare facility prototype;

and core and project funding from the Allan and Gill Gray Philanthropy (AGGP) for 3 years puts AeT in a more financially secure position for the next few years. The core funding component will allow the organisation to implement their medium term strategy.

The new funding from DGMT and AGGP is particularly significant because it is the first time that the organisation has received funding from South African philanthropies. Previously the bulk of our support has come from international funders. Most importantly, this funding represents local recognition of, and interest in the informal economy as being important to the advancement of the South African economy as a whole.



AeT's Medium Term Strategy

After the Covid 19 pandemic, AeT engaged in a strategic review process to reinforce and sharpen the organisation's focus.

Our long term goal is transformational change in the systems that govern informal work in public space, because despite 15 years of working to achieve equitable access to sustainable livelihoods for informal workers in urban public space, and despite many successes including new case-law; the day to day experience of urban informal workers has not changed and will not change unless the attitude and intransigence of the state is challenged, and new ways of properly integrating informality into the city are demonstrated. The pandemic exacerbated these conditions.

Guided by our core principles, our four key strategies are as follows :

Urban Innovation

[action] research & design + test + assess + document = influence

Urban Advocacy

support + advice + empowerment = amplified voice + visibility

Urban Learning

documentation + dissemination = understanding + reduced prejudice

Urban Intelligence

street presence + observation + engagement + responsiveness = knowledge + trust

AeT's project work falls into three programme areas:

Change Agents Programme:

Collaboration and capacity building to develop informal workers' agency to advocate for themselves on a range of issues that affect them – law and rights, occupational health and safety issues, and climate change. The intention is that in the process they become change agents that not only mobilise their peers but also engage directly with authorities to secure necessary changes.

Advocacy and Law Programme:

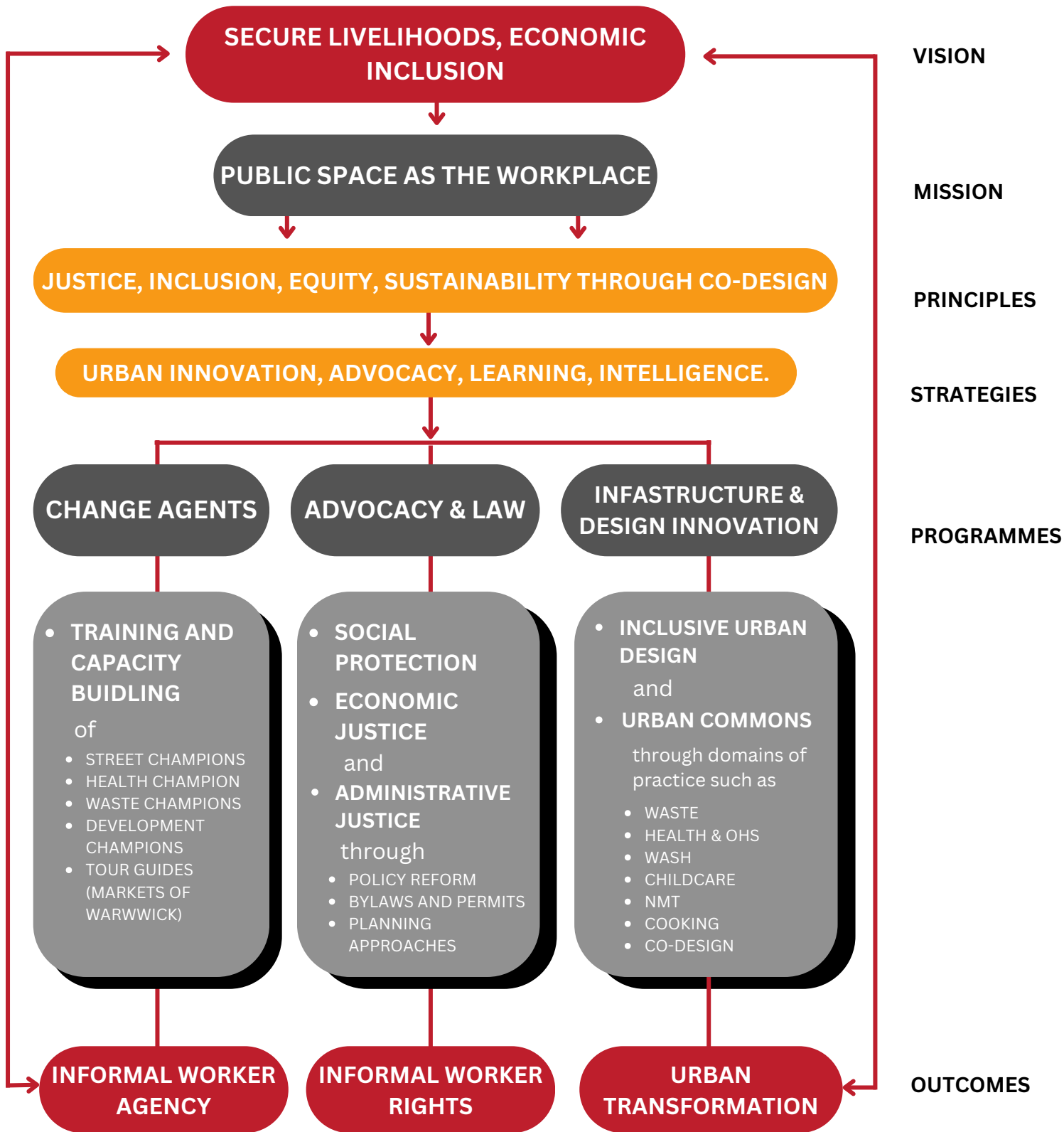
Working towards policy change, social protection, and economic and administrative justice for informal workers. In addition to research, advocacy and mediation, litigation may be used as a last resort.

Infrastructure and Design Innovation:

Action research and co-designed pilot projects. AeT and Warwick have been an 'on the ground' urban innovation laboratory for 15 years aiming to demonstrate that sustainable integration of informal workers into spatial planning and urban management systems is possible.

An overview of the strategy is illustrated below.

Strategy Diagram



Some Project Highlights

Project work is grouped under the 3 strategic programmes. Some project highlights follow.

Under **Infrastructure and Design**

Innovation, the focus in 2023 was on the ongoing Zero Waste Project, with our partners UFC and groundWork, and our Childcare project. Work on non-motorised freight and cardboard and plastic recycling also continued. The Zero Waste initiative included many project components, some of which cut across AeT's strategic programmes. The project partnership was very focused on diverting fresh organic waste from landfill. Through this initiative AeT also engaged with cooked food waste, human waste, and on building capacity on the ground to promote and support zero waste activities during the project and into the future. The Zero Waste champions – highlighted in this report under the Change Agents programme – were a key component of the overall Zero Waste initiative.

Under the **Advocacy and Law**

programme, the Law project's focus was on policy, administrative justice, and dissemination of relevant legal rights information to our informal worker constituency.

Dissemination initiatives included the Know Your Rights (Vikelani Amalungelo) campaign and developing 'Street Champions'. The Street Champions cut across the Law and Advocacy Programme and the Change Agents programme. One of AeT's core objectives is the spatial inclusion of urban informal workers and we have been working on proposals and guidelines to this end. A commission to work on spatial and health guidelines for SALGA advanced this work which is being developed as a concept note for a pilot project to test alternative spatial planning and urban management strategies. This work is ongoing.

The **Change Agents programme** is about building capacity on the ground. AeT identified and trained Health Champions initially in response to the Covid 19 pandemic, but later also focusing on the particular occupational health challenges of public space as a work place. Other agents are the Zero Waste Champions as part of the Zero waste project, and Street champions as mentioned above. The tour guides, developed as part of the longstanding Markets of Warwick initiative are another important type of change agent. The work of the Zero Waste Champions is highlighted in this report.



INFRASTRUCTURE & DESIGN INNOVATION PROGRAMME

- **Childcare**
- **Non-motorized freight**
- **Recycling**
- **Zero Waste**
 - Diverting Organic Waste from Landfill
 - Urine Diversion
 - Bokashi Pilot



CHILDCARE

Warwick Junction is a home to over 8000 informal workers, more than half of which are women. Many female informal workers have no choice but to take their children to work for reasons such as creche being too expensive, the need to breastfeed and many care services operating hours being incompatible with their own.

Warwick Junction is not an appropriate place to rear a child who will spend most of their time unsupervised, many of whom who are as young as 3 months. AeT's Childcare project provides a safe space to leave their kids during their working hours, meeting the many needs of working mothers in Warwick.

The Childcare Project, funded for 2020-2023 (and now 2024-26) by the Echidna Giving Foundation and in partnership with WIEGO, aims to provide affordable and accessible childcare services

in informal circumstances. They are located in two places within Warwick Junction, which after much consultation, were decided to be the most ideal in terms of the number of working mothers nearby and their central position in the market. The actual facilities are about the size of an average shop front and contain various appliances such as a sink, washing and changing station. They are walking distance from all markets in the Junction and have dedicated carers who facilitate nap times and meals throughout the day.

Over the course of 2023 Asiye eTafuleni has expanded the childcare project into two sites and is working on a third. Both sites pilot a different approach to what a child care facility typically is.

The facilities offer a more affordable yet stable form of care and respond to the certain proximity needed between a mother and her child.



Both sites are successfully operational with carers establishing a secure routine and schedule, regular attendees and many check-ins from the AeT staff. The operation and implemented infrastructure has provided invaluable learnings that can be put to well use going forward.

As Asiye eTafuleni has now completed two pilot sites, the aim is that the operation demonstrates to officials the workability of the project. AeT is progressing towards formal registrations (through DoH Vangasali Programme) with the ultimate goal of attracting national subsidies and enhancing visibility.

From 2024, for the next three years, The Echidna Giving Foundation has awarded AeT a follow-up grant to continue this work. In addition, the DG Murray Trust has approved a grant specifically to refine the prototype design





NON-MOTORIZED FREIGHT

Non-motorized freight is common in areas where cars are too expensive to buy and much too big for the purposes of carting cargo throughout a busy market. The same can be said for the area of Warwick Junction. Many informal businesses rely on non-motorized freight to exist.

Informal recyclers use carts to gather and transport their salvaged materials to recycling facilities such as the one located on Palmer Street. Barrow operators use their equipment to provide a transport service for customers buying in bulk or traders who need to transport goods out of storage.

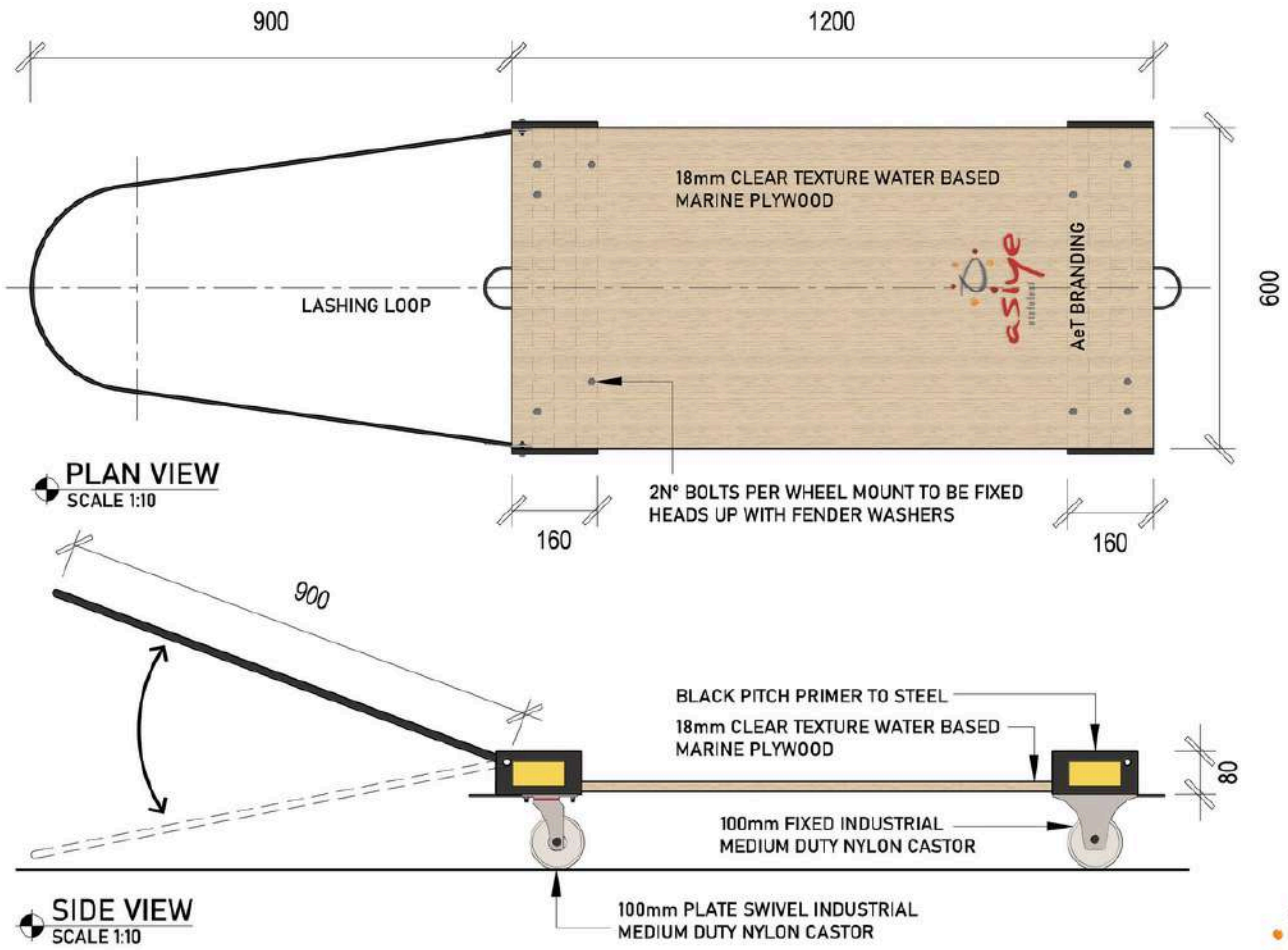
And although non-motorized freight is so integral to the informal working society they face many challenges such as harassment from police and motor vehicles.

Asiye eTafuleni recognizes their struggles and have unique responses to provide some solution.

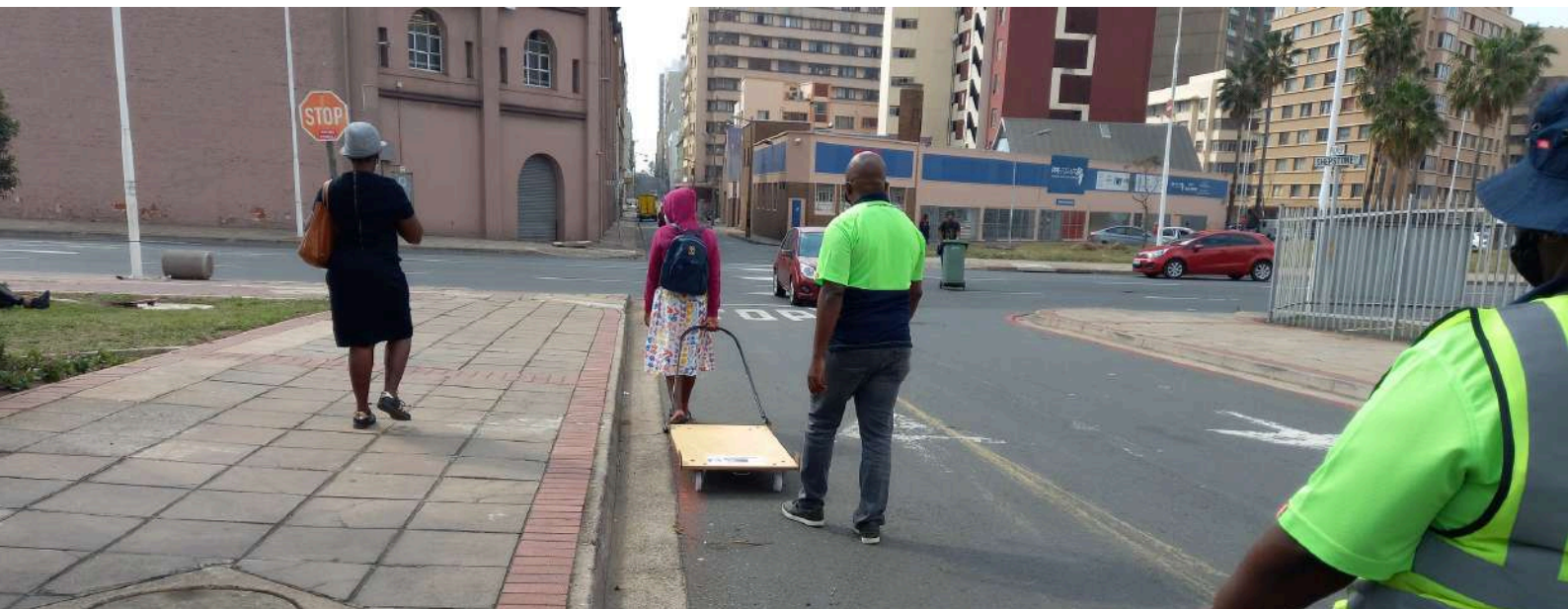
Firstly, they gather stories about non-motorized freight from an enforcement point of view. Understanding the limits and nuances of this kind of transport helps us advocate for better policy to fill the gap in our city transport strategy. And secondly, an appropriate technical response is needed. A type of cart, fully customized and appropriate for the environment of Warwick has been piloted, initially targeted towards informal recyclers.

Asiye eTafuleni also donates new wheels to the informal recyclers at Palmer Street as they wear down over a period of months.

Drawings and Activations



Designed by: Richard Dobson | Design Copyright





RECYCLING

This project is in promotion of a “safe sidewalk”, meaning it recognizes that cardboard collectors and waste salvagers obstruct the flow of pavements when sorting and compacting materials after collection. It seeks to solve this issue by creating a facility, such as the one built on Palmer Street, to act as a safe and out-of-the-way place for the workers to go about their business. They operate using carts to pull their materials, choosing to navigate Durban’s chaotic topography on foot with significant weight in tow. The facility is in a convenient, central location, agreed upon by many in the community of waste recyclers in consultation during its development.

The project aims to improve the credibility and legitimacy of the profession of an informal recycler. During 2023 the focus has been on governance, and ongoing support for the effective operation of the facility.

This is one of many informal jobs that hundreds of people rely on to make a living. The project gives many of the workers a uniform of sorts: a neon green shirt, identity card and custom designed carts. This is done with the intention of the workers completely visible and recognized by the public as a waste collector. This and the facility lend an air of dignity to the job and its workers that will hopefully be further cultivated in years to come.

The project also recognizes that is unsafe for many female waste collectors to conduct business due to harassment by street youths and vehicles with no regard for the waste collectors who pull carts on the road. As well as the fact that many of them attest to the fact that their materials are often stolen.



The facility offers a storage area for their materials letting them be at ease and conduct their business more effectively .

In the past year many new members have been inducted into the facilities operations, with older members teaching eager newcomers the routine they've established. AeT makes sure there is as little interruption to the flow of this routine as possible by doing things such as supplying them with new wheels for their carts every few months.

Seminars around business support and development, as well various workshops, are held at the facility. These events are done to further educate and empower the informal waste recyclers, with workshops that range from topics such as how to properly deal with E-waste to conflict management in the workplace.

The goal for the future is to encourage this culture of empowerment and host many more workshops and talks.





ZERO WASTE

Each market in Warwick caters to different needs and wants of the average urban customer and as a whole Warwick Market receives hundreds of thousands of people a day. This results in the market producing many different kinds of waste in copious amounts on a regular basis.

The full name of the WZW project is 'Waste Management, Urban Informality and Climate Change: Innovative zero-waste solutions from the informal market streets of Warwick in Durban'. It was funded by UMI (the Urban Movements Innovation Fund) over 3 years. The aim was to work with urban informal workers to co-develop and demonstrate innovative low-tech zero waste practices or models, as a key climate change mitigation strategy, in Warwick, that could be replicated in markets elsewhere in Africa and around the world. The project partners were: Asiye-eTafuleni (AeT), groundWork (gW) and the Urban Futures Centre (UFC) from the Durban University of Technology (DUT).

Supporting existing informal waste-picking, diversion practices and working with informal traders, the project sought to explore responsive, sustainable, environmentally just

and frugal practices that can be integrated into city systems to achieve just zero-waste systems and offer a triple win of creating jobs, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and impacting positively on city budgets.

The main focus was on diversion through local composting of organic waste from the Early Morning Market, an organic produce section of the market, and movement building for informal workers and urban waste-pickers, however there were other smaller sub-projects such as processing of cooked food waste using bokashi, testing alternative food packaging with street cooks, and urine diversion both as a waste management and circular economy intervention.

AeT's role in the project was particularly to contribute their specific local knowledge of the area and the informal economy, to facilitate access to the space and key stakeholders, and enable collaborations with informal workers in Warwick. The Zero Waste Champions, identified and mentored by AeT, became pivotal to the success of the project as a whole.

Diverting Organic Waste from Landfill

The focus of the first year of the WZW project was research and data collection to support the identification of pilot projects for implementation. Diversion of the large volumes of organic waste generated at the Early Morning Market was identified as a potential high impact intervention.

A waste audit conducted by the project team showed that an estimated 398 tonnes of waste was being sent to landfill and that 84% of this was organic material which was contributing to climate change through harmful methane production at the landfill as well as carbon emissions from the transport. Diverting and composting this waste presented an obvious high impact opportunity for the project.

The Botanic Gardens, 1,5kms away, was identified as a potential composting location and the Parks, Recreation and Culture (PRC) Department agreed and became an active partner in the project.

The first phase (approximately 4 months) comprised the collection, composting and monitoring of one wheelie bin of organic waste per week. Phase 2 scaled up the collection to one bakkie load of waste per week, and after a further 4 months phase 3 scaled up to collections twice per week. 12 windrows produced mature compost in rotation.

Monitoring, data collection and testing continued throughout and showed that the compost quality was better than commercial samples. A Cost-Benefit analysis showed that the diversion and composting of all the organic waste from the market was a viable proposition with both environmental and economic benefits.

AeT had multiple roles including facilitating stakeholder engagement, relationships with the market traders and market staff (management and cleaners), facilitating sorting and collection, and facilitating the ZW Champions involvement. A full-time staff member, appointed through the project, was responsible for much of the daily monitoring and data collection. A second round of the project that AeT is not part of is intended to roll out the composting at city markets in other locations.



Bokashi Pilot

Building on initial research with street cooks in Year 2, AeT proposed a Bokashi experiment to improve management of the cooked food waste generated on the street that is not suitable for conventional composting.

The initial small experiment was used as a Bokashi training exercise for the ZWC's who arranged the food waste collection from previously identified cooks, layering the waste and Bokashi bran, leachate drainage, and monitoring. 300 litres of food waste was collected from only 5 cooks over a period of 4 days, suggesting an average of 30 litres of cooked food waste per day per cook that would otherwise go to land-fill. There are hundreds of street cooks in the Warwick market area so the potential impact of diversion is significant.

After 3 weeks the Bokashi was ready, and in week 4 was transported to the Botanic Gardens to be incorporated into the 'organics to compost' project. The pre-compost improved the overall composting efficiency and the composting team agreed that the pre-compost generated from the pilot could be accommodated in the windrows at the Botanic Gardens.

Based on the success of the initial composting experiment, and the positive impact of better waste management for the cooks, the Zero Waste Champions decided that a bigger pilot to process cooked food waste using Bokashi would be desirable. The ZWC's identified the cooks to participate, arranged a collection and layering schedule, and leachate drainage and monitoring schedule. AeT supported the process by purchasing and modifying the drums and arranging a convenient 'site' to locate them. A total of 10 drums were set up, to be used on a 3 week rotation, processing 450-600 litres of food waste per week.



Human Waste

AeT had already facilitated a community response to the challenge of human waste on the streets in Warwick Junction as a result of inadequate and dysfunctional public toilets by installing a public urinal at the David Webster corner outside the Early Morning Market.

The significant positive environmental impact encouraged the ZWC's to take this on as an additional project to be funded from their project budget. Initially a specific stipend was paid for the management of the urinal (emptying and cleaning), but once the ZWC's were formally appointed as a group it was handed over to them, and essentially privatised. AeT has continued to pursue urine processing because the value of the recovered nutrients could cover the management costs. After following up on several promising options, one private company is considering a collection model.

One of the ZWC's was already running a bucket urinal near his work place, and through the project the infrastructure has been upgraded; again with support from AeT and using recycled materials. As a further ZWC initiative, a third urinal iteration has been co-designed with the female ZWC's and is about to be tested; this time with an enclosure to cater for women.

The ZWC's managed these facilities on their own. Further iterations are in development inspired by the spontaneous proliferation of other examples on the street.





ADVOCACY & LAW PROGRAMME

- **Law Project**
- **Spatial Guidelines**



LAW PROJECT

As an informal trader in Warwick, conflict with the law is almost unavoidable. Many are operating in urban public space, most of which is not legally allocated to them. Furthermore, this space is underdeveloped in it's policy, most of it being vague and up for interpretation. This puts the informal traders, who have no experience in navigating the law, at a disadvantage.

As part of AeT's initiative to promote Urban Advocacy for the empowerment of informal traders, the Law Project was created. This project seeks to give traders the tools to fight the various conflicts that they face with the law on a regular basis. An example of this are the punitive measures given by the police who attempt to regulate informal trade bylaws. This could range from a heavy fining or a confiscation of goods to the extreme such as in one case where a shooting occurred.

The Law Project includes the dissemination of useful information about the law to traders. This was done through initiatives such as the Know Your Rights campaign or street law seminars.

The Law Project also includes the training of Street Champions. These are traders who undergo more thorough training in order to advise or assist their colleagues on the street in conflict. In the case that the conflict cannot be resolved they are equipped to report the situation on incident forums. They are also able to interact effectively with city officials, gather incident reports and are able to think critically on how to solve challenges. They are a huge asset to the informal trading community and continue to fight the systematic challenges many are faced with in our law system. This project was done with the help of WIEGO.



SPATIAL GUIDELINES

Public spaces in towns and cities have always been an economic asset. Informal economic activity is central to much of Durban's Inner city public space, and is a significant form of employment, giving income opportunities to thousands. It is an integral part of our city's culture although the space is contested, and spatial policy and guidelines have never been sufficiently accommodating of informal work.

Informal trading falls under the management of many different government departments resulting in a lack of strategic organized direction, and the attempt to retro-fit these activities into colonial and apartheid-urban spaces that are not designed for them. There is not enough space and amenities to enable safe and accessible public space trading for the large numbers of people who depend on it as a way of life. This is an ongoing challenge that prejudices informal work.

Sidewalks are often too narrow, many spaces are being illegally operated due to inadequate permits being made available, people are

working in spaces where there is no infrastructure including shelter, storage, or ablution facilities. Others are forced to work in places with no foot traffic resulting in failing businesses.

Urban transformation to more appropriate city form for the growing informal economy is urgent. Asiye eTafuleni is working towards systemic change that has the potential to reform restrictive and ineffective policy and planning.

The problems of ineffective urban management were exacerbated during the Covid 19 pandemic. In an environment where people were already struggling to find space, they had to somehow create even more for physical distancing, and hand washing was and is almost impossible where there is no water or ablutions.

Asiye eTafuleni worked together with traders to devise ways to keep their businesses within the regulations of Covid-19.



Proposed strategies included periodic markets and the use of public spaces such as parking space in innovative ways to create the required physical distancing. Many ideas were tested, keeping in mind that flexibility was key.

From 2020 to 2022 AeT was commissioned to contribute to “Public Space Trading Guidelines for Local Government” for SALGA.

Initially our commission was focused specifically on health, but it quickly became evident that this could not be addressed effectively without looking at spatial guidelines as well. Spatial considerations became more integral to all aspects of the SALGA guideline as a consequence of AeT’s involvement.

Recommendations in the report included ways to reconfigure physical space, as well as institutional and urban management suggestions. Use of planning mechanisms already allowed for in the Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act (SPLUMA) was proposed as a key strategy. The spatial planning interventions are an ongoing area of exploration for AeT.





CHANGE AGENTS

- **Waste Champions**
 - A personal look into the Waste Champions
- **Markets of Warwick and Tour Guides**

Waste Champions

The Zero-Waste Champions (ZWC) are a group of individual informal traders who AeT identified to work closely with the Warwick Zero Waste Team, with the intention to influence behaviour change around waste practices in the Warwick market precinct, raise consciousness around zero-waste and climate change, and actively promote new practices. As they are embedded in the trader community they have been supported and encouraged to become 'change agents' through the example of their own practices and their engagement with their peers and customers. The ZWC initiative was designed and facilitated by AeT, as an important contribution to promoting movement building through the project.

The ZWC's co-designed a pledge which they all signed, and received a stipend from the budget to compensate them for their time spent on project activities. They were supplied with branded T shirts and hats to signify their role in the WZW project. The ZWC's attended regular trainings, workshops and events and have been involved in various project activities particularly to support the compost pilot scale up. The minimum commitment described in the pledge has largely been exceeded except for one person who was underperforming and with the group's consensus was asked to step down.

In addition to the required meetings and activities, the ZWC's have undertaken their own initiatives including targeted clean ups where they also involve their colleagues. Changing their own behaviour to set an example was set out as a key objective for the ZWC's.

One of the selection criteria was the willingness and confidence to engage in sometimes difficult conversations about waste and climate change. Through the ongoing training and support that the selected traders have received as ZWC's, their capacity confidence to engage with their peers and customers, to participate in co-design exercises and WZW 'road-shows', demonstrations and creative performance activities, to initiate and run their own projects, to talk publicly about their work at events, and to be effective ambassadors for zero waste and for organising as a collective has increased exponentially. The impact on the ZWC's themselves and their immediate communities has been significant and their advocacy for zero waste seems likely to persist.



A Personal Look at the Waste Champions

One of the ZWC's, Thandazile Nyathi who is a street cook, independently initiated a litter management system along the particularly problematic sidewalk adjacent to an on-street mini-bus taxi rank, where she works. She arranged for the taxi drivers to make a small daily financial contribution which she pays to a group of homeless people living nearby to clean the area every day. Her confidence through the ZWC programme and 'status' as a ZWC enabled this initiative. Apart from the obvious benefit of a cleaner area, this has shown how urban management can be a partnership between the city and informal workers in public space. Litter in the stormwater drains along the street edge has been an ongoing challenge that the city has unsuccessfully tried to address through modifying the stormwater inlet grates. A simple behaviour change initiative has effectively solved the problem.

Another ZWC, Ayanda Sokanyile, continues to play an important role in motivating better waste practices on the David Webster corner, while also managing the public urinal.

Noloyiso, a ZWC who is a trader inside the Early Morning Market where the organic waste for the composting pilot is generated has been particularly involved in encouraging separation source in the market.

Mr Ngobo, a ZWC who is a taxi rank manager and trader operates another public urinal which is included as part of the ZWC urine diversion project.





MARKETS OF WARWICK

Warwick Junction is home to 9 markets. These markets provide everything from services such as printing, tailoring and shoe making, to goods such as food, jewelry, and even traditional medicine. Each market comes with its very own array of traditional and cultural practices that are an honour to observe. Asiye eTafuleni’s “Markets of Warwick Tours” allow people this honour via the means of a carefully planned, guided and secure walk-through of all 9 markets.

These tours are given year-round to an average of 1005 high school students, 135 university and international students, 102 private organizations and even 33 Air BnB booked guests.

Not only are these tours of academic interest to the school

and university curriculums in regard to informality, urban design, and city management but it also has a great tourism appeal for people wanting the unique and authentic experience of the markets while in Durban.

The tours can take anywhere from two to two and a half hours. AeT employs local tour guides who are well-versed in the intricacies and history of Warwick to lead each tour. They will provide in-depth information, anecdotes, and knowledge of traditional and cultural practices as they take groups on their walking tour, occasionally even allowing time to shop in certain markets. They are also accompanied by security provided by the TAC, “Traders against crime”, a trader-founded, local council which was established to fight the high crime rates in Warwick in the past.



The tour programme has recovered well after the Covid-19 pandemic. Throughout this pandemic the tours had to be shut down due to complications with social distancing and the markets not operating as they usually did. Now, the programme is back in full force.

Authorities and parents with children in high school have become less resistant with the idea of the tours, noticing the benefits and security it provides as an excursion. This has led to “The Markets of Warwick” becoming one of the first excursions to be re-included into the school curriculum after covid. The tours run as a well-made system, allowing students a safe and guided environment to engage with the markets with enthusiasm.

This surge in tour numbers has led to the realization that Asiye eTafuleni must lead a new season of training for additional tour guides. This is a reassuring indication about the future of the tour programme and its income earning opportunities for existing and future guides.



Forecast

Towards the end of 2023/2024 was the first time in AeT's existence that there was the prospect of insufficient funding to sustain the organization and its full programme of work – this despite significant fund-raising efforts by the Team. However, the Echidna Giving Foundation renewed their Grant to WIEGO, who in turn provided a sub-grant to AeT to continue the Child Care Programme. This was invaluable, because it provided institutional continuity for both AeT and the child care work. It did however mean, that AeT's full capacity was constrained.

There were nevertheless, hopeful prospects for support from South African Philanthropies. This was particularly exciting because for all the years since AeT was established in 2008, the organization had not attracted the attention and grants from home-based donors. It was also a period where AeT concluded a partnership with groundWork and the DUT Urban Futures Centre engaging in joint projects responding to urban informality and zero waste.

This partnership was both productive and successful. It

entrenched AeT climate change consciousness and specific project work that responded to climate mitigation and zero waste, as identified and prioritized by informal street and market traders. These initiatives are anticipated to continue and feature in funding proposals under consideration.

The challenge of reduced funding has constructively precipitated AeT strategic reviews and the pursuit of the identifiable `green shoots` evident in new and context responsive projects. AeT continues to maintain good relationships with informal workers, which is further informing grant proposals that are attempting to address their current challenges through systemic changes advocated for by the AeT team.

The 2023/2024 review period ends with not unfamiliar challenges and a sober understanding of the immediate funding constraints, but AeT encouraged by the evident `green shoots` which could flourish into meaningful further work in support of urban informality.

Richard Dobson

Our Funders, Partners and Collaborators

