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# Measuring Stimulus Effects Around Stock Road in Philippi in the Western Cape





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# Measuring Stimulus Effects Around Stock Road in Philippi in the Western Cape

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# Abstract

The study aims to contribute to the body of knowledge on the impact of social protection and employment stimulus measures on the formal and informal economies, by exploring shifts in purchasing behaviour between 2019 and 2022 among informal and small traders in a 3.5 km radius around Stock Road in Philippi in the Western Cape. We investigate the spending patterns of 30 social relief distress (SRD) grant recipients and 31 basic education employment initiative (BEEI) participants in the same area in order to reveal that the main linkage between formal and informal economies are hybrid wholesalers and supermarkets.

Our results also confirm that unconditional cash transfers have a positive impact on both the formal and informal economies. These findings suggest revisions to Davies and Thurlow's (2009) South African Formal-Informal Model.

### Keywords

Economic stimulus, informal traders, Philippi, South Africa

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### Résumé

L'étude vise à contribuer au corpus de connaissances sur l'impact des mesures de protection sociale et de relance de l'emploi sur les économies formelle et informelle, en explorant les changements de comportement d'achat entre 2019 et 2022 parmi les commerçants informels et les petits commerçants dans un rayon de 3,5 km autour de Stock Road à Philippi, dans la province du Cap-Occidental. Nous étudions les habitudes de dépenses de 30 bénéficiaires de subventions de secours social (SRD) et de 31 participants à l'initiative pour l'emploi et l'éducation de base (BEEI) dans la même zone, afin de révéler que les principaux liens entre les économies formelle et informelle sont les grossistes hybrides et les supermarchés.

Nos résultats confirment également que les transferts monétaires inconditionnels ont un impact positif sur les économies formelle et informelle. Ces résultats suggèrent des révisions du modèle formel-informel sudafricain de Davies et Thurlow (2009).

### Mots-clés

Stimulus economique, commerçants informels, Philippi, Afrique du Sud

# Introduction

South Africa's high unemployment rate ranks as one of the highest in the world (Buger & Fourie, 2019). Given this, one would expect that those who fail to find a job in the formal sector would turn to the Informal sector. However, the South African informal sector remains small. Social protection and employment stimulus measures may be able to accelerate the growth of the informal and small traders' sector of the economy. However, few studies have examined the formal-informal sector linkages and the impact of such measures, more so since the COVID-19 pandemic which has given rise to economic vulnerabilities and downturns.

This paper aims to contribute to the body of knowledge on the impact of social protection and employment stimulus measures on the formal and informal economies.

In July 2019, Infusion Knowledge Hub conducted a study on opportunities for wholesale in Stock Road in Philippi in the Western Cape Province on behalf of a large South African supermarket chain. The purpose of the study was to understand the trading environment in the informal and small business market to elicit a valueadded cash and carry shopping proposition (Vawda, Prinsloo and Prinsloo, 2019). The results showed that there was a strong linkage between the informal and formal economies through the hybrid wholesalers, and that the effect was not 'trickling up'. The linkage was as depicted by the South African Formal-Informal Model produced by Davies and Thurlow (2009, p. 6) as shown in Figure 1.

In June 2022, as part of a research program launched by the Presidency of South Africa and Agence Française de Développement, funded by the European Union, Infusion Knowledge Hub replicated the study to determine whether there are shifts in behaviour purchasing amongst the informal and small traders that participated in the 2019 research. In doing so, the study aimed to provide granular data on shifts in the informal and small traders' operating environment around Stock Road in Philippi between July 2019 and June 2022. In addition, the research investigated the spending patterns of 30 Social Relief Distress (SRD) grant recipients and 31 Basic Education Employment Initiative (BEEI) participants that lived within a 3.5 km radius of Stock Road.

The SRD grant and BEEI are part of the emergency social protection and employment stimulus measures announced in April 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic lockdowns that were severely impacting the economy. The paper is presented in four sections. Section 1 presents the background and context of the study. The research design is presented in Section 2. Section 3 summarises the findings of shifts in the informal and small traders' market environment and SRD grant recipients' and BEEI participants' spending. Section 4 discusses the findings, gaps in the study, and avenues for future research and offers concluding remarks.

# 1. Background and context

# 1.1 Informal and Small Traders in South Africa

The informal economy is generally defined as a sector of the economy that functions outside of government regulations. Informal traders can be defined as people who have businesses that are rarely registered at national or regional levels, are cash-based and thus do not pay taxes and not usually have formal arrangements with employees (Nguyen & Canh, 2020). Informal traders play a valuable role in the informal economy (Raniga & Ringson, 2022). According to Statistics South Africa (2014), in terms of gross domestic output, the estimated informal traders' contribution to gross domestic product is 6%. As a prospect for job creation and income generation the informal sector is thus becoming the focus of attention for policymakers (Dey & Dasgupta, 2009).

To understand how alternative policies may have different impacts on the formal and informal sector, a classification of informal activities by Davies and Thurlow (2019) provides a clear framework. They identify four types of informal activities: (i) informal producers; (ii) informal traders; (iii) workers who are informally employed in producing formal sector products; and (iv) informally employed workers producing goods and services that are not produced by the formal sector.

Informal producers can be defined as small enterprises producing goods and services including processed foods, textiles, and clothing. They compete with other formal sector firms producing similar products, thus the main linkages between informal producers and the formal sector are through the purchasing of formal sector intermediaries (Davies and Thurlow, 2019). Informal traders differ from informal producers in that they provide a service to consumers and do not produce a product.

The informal economy is often seen as a shock absorber for low-skilled workers, supporting them in earning money and maintaining their livelihoods. It is for such reasons that governments such as South Africa have been supporting the informal economy to stimulate a favourable environment for informal market activities (Khambule, 2020). However, these assumptions have been put to the test by the recent COVID-19 pandemic that has given rise to economic vulnerabilities and downturns.

As a response to the pandemic, South Africa's government has funded measures of social and economic relief to stimulate the economy and protect the most vulnerable segments of the population. Research has shown that policies can produce diverging outcomes for formal and informal economies (Davies & Thurlow, 2019). Davies and Thurlow (2009, p. vi) in their paper on the economywide linkages between the formal and informal economies show that:

"... unconditional cash transfers stimulate demand for informally produced products, thereby raising informal employment without undermining formal producers".

# 1.2 Formal-Informal linkages In South Africa

Few studies have examined the formal-informal sector labour market linkages. Linkages can occur through individual transactions, sub-sector network or a value chain (Chen, 2012).

Nackerdien & Yu (2018) use a panel of the National Income Dynamics Study (NIDS) data to examine the formal/informal labour market transitions of the workers. They find that older and more educated individuals living in urban areas and coming from households with fewer old-age grant recipients are more likely to work In the formal sector, while more educated white male are associated with a greater likelihood of transitioning from informal to formal sector employment.

Valodia and Devey (2011) examined forward and backward linkages by investigating the source of supply of inputs utilised in production by informal firms and found that 42% of informal businesses listed medium to large enterprises as the primary source of their Inputs, while 98% of informal businesses sold their products and services to private consumers and households.

# Figure 1. Conceptual Framework for the Formal-Informal economy-wide Model



Source: Davies and Thurlow (2009, p. 6)

As per figure 1, Davies and Thurlow (2009) offer a conceptual framework to describe and analyse the linkages between the formal and informal sectors in the South African economy referred to as the South African Formal-Informal Model (SAFIM). The South African economy in the SAFIM is represented by three regions: 1) formal economy, 2) informal economy, and 3) rest of the world. The formal economy or region produces a wide range of products that it consumes and sells to the informal economy and the rest of the world. It also imports products for consumption, pays taxes to the government and invests its savings in the formal financial institutions. It is autonomous while the informal economy or region produces few goods and imports most of the products it needs from the formal sector creating a trade deficit. Consequently, it requires earnings to fund this deficit. The SAFIM shows that it receives money from four sources: 1) social transfers from government, 2) borrowing, 3) informal wage incomes, and 4) formal purchase of informal goods. The model offers various mechanisms that link the formal and informal economy in South Africa.

# 1.4 Context of the study

Stock Road is characterized by a high density of wholesalers supplying goods to small and Informal traders in the Greater Philippi area. Hybrid wholesalers are defined as "wholesalers that also have retail supermarket offerings" (Competition Commission South Africa, 2019, p. 26). In July 2019, Infusion Knowledge Hub conducted a study on opportunities for wholesale in Stock Road in Philippi in the Western Cape Province on behalf of a large South African supermarket chain as a part of a study exploring the trading environments of small and informal traders to determine their purchasing behavior. The purpose of the study was to understand the trading environment in the informal and small business market to elicit a value-added cash and carry shopping proposition (Vawda, Prinsloo and Prinsloo, 2019). The study showed that there was a strong linkage between the informal and formal economies through the hybrid wholesalers, and that the effect was not 'trickling up'. The linkage was as depicted by the South African Formal-Informal Model produced by Davies and Thurlow (2009).

The present study replicates the previous one with the aim of determining whether there are shifts in purchasing behaviour amongst the informal and small traders that participated in the 2019 research which could be attributed to the pandemic and the relief measures set up by the government. To this end, the research also investigated the spending patterns of 30 Social Relief Distress (SRD) grant recipients and 31 Basic Education Employment Initiative (BEEI) participants that lived within a 3.5 km radius of Stock Road.

The SRD grant and BEEI are part of the emergency social protection and employment stimulus measures announced in April 2020 by the South African President Cyril Ramaphosa in response to the COVID-19 pandemic lockdowns that were severely impacting the economy. The aim of the employment stimulus measures is to contribute to the wider economic recovery specifically in townships and rural economies through the multiplier effects of local spending enabled by the intervention. The emergency social protection intervention programmes can similarly contribute to local economies through the spending it affords.

The SRD grant of R350 per month for unemployed people not covered by any other form of social security was one of the social protection measures. In October 2021, the BEEI was introduced as part of the employment stimulus measures. Young people between 18 and 35 years old are placed as assistants at schools for five months and receive a monthly stipend equivalent to the national minimum wage, R3,817.44 (Presidential Employment Stimulus and Department of Basic Education, 2021). The BEEI continued into 2022, while the SRD grant was terminated at the end of April 2021 and reinstated in August 2021.

The study aims to examine the impact of social protection and employment stimulus measures on the formal and informal economies and contribute to knowledge on the formal-informal linkages in South Africa.

# 2. Research Design

# 2.1 Data collection technique

The structured survey administered to informal and small traders in 2019 was used in the 2022 study with four additional questions, namely: 1) how has COVID-19 changed the way you do business? 2) how has COVID-19 affected the products and services that you offer? 3) since COVID-19, do you have more customers that are now relying on a government grant, and 4) if yes, do they represent most of your customers? The survey required respondents to list their six top suppliers and enumerate the twelve products that they most frequently purchase to gain insights into their purchasing behaviour – where and what they buy. The survey was administered face-to-face in both 2019 and 2022. A copy of the survey is in Appendix 1 for reference purposes.

Two data collection techniques were used to gather primary data from SRD grant recipients and BEEI participants to mitigate errors in recall (Ahmed et al., 2006). A survey was conducted face-to-face with the respondents which was complemented with telephone calls every two days to document their daily spending. The study accepted the spontaneous responses from respondents; it did not probe respondents on their recall of goods and services purchased or which suppliers they supported, e.g. the study did not probe for goods and services subject to 'sin taxes'. A copy of the survey is in Appendix 1.

# 2.2 Sample frame

The 2019 study field team was used in this follow-up research. In the first two weeks of June 2022, the team attempted to contact the informal and small traders who participated in the original research. They used the mobile numbers that the traders provided in the 2019 study. Unfortunately, none of the mobile numbers were in use at the time of the fieldwork. This is aligned with data from GeoPoll that tracks cellphone usage habits in South Africa. In the 2020/2021 survey they found that 45% of South Africans owned multiple phones (Kibuacha, 2021).

The first survey did not capture the physical location of the informal and small traders' businesses, nonetheless the field team scouted the location that they had traversed in 2019 in search of the traders to no success. They replaced these with sixty informal and small traders in the same vicinity using convenience sampling – traders who volunteered to participate in the study. Consequently, the informal and small traders respondent profile between the 2019

and 2022 surveys were very different. In 2019, two thirds (68.1%) were grocers, while in 2022 the respondents were more diverse as summarized in Table 1. In 2022, three in five (60%) of the traders were informal producers compared to one quarter (23.45%) in 2019. Informal producers are defined by Davies and Thurlow (2009, p. 2):

"... includes small enterprises producing goods and services that compete with formal sector firms producing similar products. Examples include processed foods, textiles, and clothing. Informal producers generate employment for other informal workers, and they compete in product markets based on the price at which they can supply their goods".

CORE BUSINESS	Groceries	Selling cleaning materials	Selling beauty products (hair/nails/ body)	Selling take away/home- made foods/restaurant	Selling clothing/ shoes	Selling services i.e. hairdresser/ barber	OTHER
2019 (n=47)	68.1%	2.1%	6.4%	21.3%		2.1%	
2022 (n=60)	13.3%	1.7%	6.7%	31.7%	13.3%	28.3%	5.0%

Table 1. Core Goods and Services Provided by Informal and Small Traders in 2019 and 2022

# Source: Completed Surveys

Furthermore, there were more women traders (30%) in the 2022 study compared to only 18% in 2019. Roughly one in ten (9%) were younger traders between the ages of 20 and 35 in 2022 than only 2% in the 2019 study. In the 2022 study, roughly two thirds (64%) started their business because they were unemployed, compared to approximately less than one third (29%) in 2019.

SRD grant recipients and BEEI participants were recruited at the same time in the same 3.5 km radius of Stock Road using the snowball technique (Biernacki and Waldorf, 1981). As per the requirements of the BEEI, the vast majority (96.8%) were under 35 years old. The sample of SRD grant recipients in the study covered a wider age range as summarized in Table 2.

	20 to 25 years	26 to 30 years	31 to 35 years	36 to 40 years	41 to 50 years	51 to 60 years	+ 61 years
SRD Grant Recipients (n = 30)	30.0%	23.3%	13.3%		26.7%	3.3%	3.3%
BEEI Participants (n = 31)	48.4%	41.9%	6.5%	3.2%			

# Table 2. Age Profile of Informal and Small Traders in 2019 and 2022

Source: Completed Surveys

Four in five (81%) BEEI participants in the study were female compared to 57% SRD grant recipient respondents. Three quarters (73%) of SRD grant recipients in the study received the grant for less than one year and the remainder of the respondents collected it for between one and two years. While over half (57%) of the BEEI participants in the study were working as school assistants for less than one year, one third (33%) have been working for between one and two years.

It is notable that one in a quarter (23%) SRD grant recipients and one in ten (10%) BEEI participants in this study were recipients of the child support grant. Three percent of SRD grant recipients in the study also received the old age pension grant. However, the study did not explore the mechanisms that allowed existing grant beneficiaries to receive the SRD grants.

# 2.3 Challenges with data collection

The study faced three challenges. First, the considerable differences between the informal and small traders participating in the 2019 and 2022 studies made it difficult to determine whether there were shifts in purchasing behaviour. Nonetheless, the study was able to explore whether hybrid wholesalers continue to be the main suppliers to informal and small traders in the 3.5km radius around Stock Road in Philippi in 2022. The data also allowed for exploring shifts in important aspects of informal and small traders businesses including the reasons for starting the business, the facilitating and impeding factors of running the business, the use of technology in operating the business, credit facilities provided to and by them, and the payment methods employed to and by them. Additionally, the study explored whether SRD grant recipients and BEEI participants contributed significantly to their business.

Second, the study may be affected by recall bias even though the questions related to purchasing and spending behaviour were carefully constructed, and the field team were experience and retrained. Third, the study was limited to a 3.5km radius of Stock Road in Philippi and used convenience sampling. Consequently, the findings cannot be generalised for the Philippi area or nationally.

# 3. Findings

# 3.1 Informal and Small Traders

# 3.1.1 Purchasing behaviour of informal and small traders

In 2022, the cumulative most frequently stocked goods equal 237 unique items which is 177% more than the items stocked in 2019 (134 items) by informal and small traders. Similarly, in 2022, the traders report 58 unique suppliers that they purchase their inputs from, compared to 49 providers in 2019. The difference may be attributed to the diversity of informal and small traders participating in the 2022 study.

Hybrid wholesalers remain the main suppliers to small and informal traders in both 2019 and 2022 studies. This indicates that hybrid wholesalers are the main link between the formal and informal economy. Table 3 shows the top 6 suppliers that respondents listed.

Top Suppliers	2019 (n=57)	2022 (n=60)
Goal Wholesalers	11	13
Strikers (including meat)	8	8
China Town	0	5
Wholesalers Belville	0	5
J&K wholesaler	11	4
Shoprite	0	4
Jumbo	29	3
Philippi Cash and Carry	24	0
Giant	14	0
1-Up Cash & Carry	11	0

# Table 3. Top Suppliers in 2019 and 2022

Source: Completed Surveys

More (66.7%) informal and small traders in the 2022 study purchase their stock/supplies within a 1km radius from their businesses compared to 56.7% in 2019. In the main, two thirds (67.3%) use taxis to get to their suppliers compared to only one quarter (22.0%) in 2019. Furthermore, fewer own cars (29.1%) in 2022 than 38% in 2019.

The vast majority of informal and small traders in 2019 (92%) and 2022 (98%) paid their suppliers using cash. There was a large increase in the number of respondents using electronic means of payment – from 12% in 2019 to 35% in 2022. This included using credit/debit cards, digital payments, and electronic fund transfers (EFTs). Similarly, more informal and small traders in 2022 used technology in different aspects of running their businesses than in 2019 (Figure 2). There is a large increase in the number of informal traders using technology to manage their stock, having a social media presence for their businesses, and using internet banking. It appears that there was an increase in the use of technology in running their businesses in the last three years.



# Figure 2. The Use of Technology in Business in 2019 and 2022

Source: Completed Surveys

# a) Changing business environment

In 2019, informal and small traders identified crime followed by intense competition as the biggest barriers to sustaining and growing their businesses. In the 2022 study, crime took second place and merely having customers was the top-of-mind concern for traders. This fuelled their fear of failure. These informal and small traders blamed this business environment on the high levels of unemployment as a result of COVID-19. They also noticed that their customers are cutting spending, especially for services that they can perform themselves, such as carwash, manicures, etc. Furthermore, the profitability of their business was another driver of their fear of closure. They noticed sharp increases in the prices of stock/supplies which reduced their profit margins and challenged their attempts to remain profitable. Very few of the respondents reported increasing the price of the goods and services that they offered. Their strategy in response to fewer customers and an increase in stock/supplies cost was to stock fewer items, reduce the variety of goods and services that they offered, and purchased stock/supplies on demand. For example, a tailor now only buys fabric for guaranteed orders where customers put down a deposit whereas before she kept a variety to show her customers and, historically she used to have readymade items on display for clients to purchase. It appears that informal and small traders in 2022 are more concerned about profitability and viability of their businesses than those interviewed in 2019.

# b) SRD grant and BEEI impact on traders

Roughly half (46%) of the informal and small traders in 2022 reported that most of their customers received grants from government, 18% reported that most of their customers did not receive government grants and 36% did not know. They believed that most of their customers received the child support grant (27%) followed by SRD (27%) and old age pension grants (20%) (Figure 3). Ten percent reported that their customers are participants of the BEEI.

Two thirds (62%) reported that both the SRD grants and the BEEI had a positive impact on their businesses compared to 32% who said it had no impact and 6% who did not know. One shoe retailer in the study described the impact of the BBEI as:





Source: Completed Surveys

"It affected my business in a positive way as they [BEEI participants] became my target market and I gave them credit. I know if they buy they will show others at work - especially teachers and staff."

A notable finding was that one of the car washes in the study started the business with the money received from the SRD grant. He explained it as follows:

"I am one of the people who was able to start a business and stock out of R350 SRD grant money. If it was not for it I would not have started my business and most people who support my business are the youth." Another respondent in 2022 study also reported receiving the SRD. He is a carpenter who was unable to provide his services during COVID-19 lockdowns. He reported that in the period he suffered financial and stock loss. He used the SRD grant to purchase stock, unfortunately it was stolen.

Both the SRD grant and the BEEI have a positive impact on the informal and small traders businesses because many of their customers are recipients. The SRD grant that informal and small traders in the study received served as 'start-up capital' for one enterprise and 'cash flow' for another.

# c) Changing profile of informal and small traders

In 2022, two thirds (63.8%) of the small and informal traders started their businesses because of unemployment compared to only one third (28.8%) in 2019. Roughly two thirds (61.5%) of informal and small traders in the 2019 study started their enterprises because they 'enjoy running own businesses' compared to one quarter (25.9%) in 2022. Over half (56%) of small and informal traders in the 2022 study had their businesses for less than five years compared to 44% in 2019. It appears that some respondents opened their businesses during the pandemic. For example, one informal trader reported that she was unemployed when COVID-19 lockdown started. She decided to sell fish to households in her community. This had a positive impact on her livelihood. She feels that she is better off now than before the COVID-19 lockdowns.

"It has changed for the better because if it was not for COVID I would have never thought outside of the box. COVID is the reason that I am selling fish. COVID made me learn things about fast food. I was not working before COVID and made a plan during COVID to start my own business. Many people stayed at home, so I just started selling my fish." (Fish Trader, 2022)

It appears from the data that shrinking employment opportunities in the formal sector may have spurred some individuals to enter the informal and small trader spaces. The story of the fish seller indicates that the change in the way people worked as a result of COVID-19 lockdowns may have offered opportunities for new types of services.

There were more women (39%) and youth (57%) informal and small traders in the 2022 study compared to 18% and 53% respectively in 2019. The respondent profile indicates that more women and young people may be considering informal and small trading as a livelihood option.



# Figure 4. Number of Assistants (Staff/Family/Friends) in 2019 and 2022

An important finding is that in the 2019 study, that was biased towards grocers, the informal and small traders employed more assistants in their businesses compared to 2022 (Figure 4). The assistants can be family, friends, and staff. The data appears to reveal that in 2022, this part of the informal and small trader sector is providing fewer work opportunities than in 2019. This may be due to their reported lower profit margins and fewer loyal customers. In 2022, fewer traders (70%) reported that their customers were loyal compared to the vast majority of respondents (97%) in 2019.

Source: Completed Surveys

All the SRD grant recipients in the study agreed that the grant offered them tremendous relief. One grant recipient reported that it prevented his family from starving:

"Since the grant I had something in hand to support my children. It relieved our starvation".

For many of the BEEI respondents, working at minimum wage improved their lives and gave them some form of independence, allowing them to budget, plan and make decisions independently. One BEEI participant summarised this sentiment:

"I can buy products that I was longing to buy and budget as well. My lifestyle changed as I can make my own decisions."

The completed survey data showed that BEEI participants cumulatively listed 254 unique items that they purchased compared to 151 listed by SRD grant recipients in their monthly shopping. Both SRD grant recipients (60.6%) and BEEI participants (67.10%) are generally buying food items on a monthly basis, of which most is spent on non-perishable groceries (Table 4). This is followed by toiletries (13.3%), household energy (6.6%) and detergents (5.9%) for SRD grant recipients. BEEI participants show a similar spending pattern with household energy (6.4%) being second followed by toiletries (4.8%) then detergents (2.8%). They spend more on apparel and cosmetics than SRD grant recipients.

Items	SRD (n=30)	BEEI (n=31)
Non-perishable groceries (coffee, sugar, oil, pasta, bread, beans, flour, sugar, milk powder, spices, sweets, biscuits, and crisps, etc.)	45.90%	48.00%
Toiletries including (sanitary towels and sanitiser)	13.30%	4.80%
Detergents	5.90%	2.80%
Vegetables	4.40%	9.10%
Diary (cheese, milk, margarine, yoghurt, butter, amazi, eggs)	4.40%	7.90%
Meat (chicken, mutton, lamp, pork)	4.40%	3.60%
Electricity	4.40%	4.40%
Apparel (clothes and shoes, underwear, accessories, mask)	3.00%	5.20%
Fruit	1.50%	2.00%
Processed meat (polony, burgers, viennas, russians, sausages)	1.50%	2.40%
Baby Food	1.50%	0.00%
Baby diapers	1.50%	0.00%
Candles	1.50%	0.40%
Cosmetics	1.50%	2.00%
Data	1.50%	1.20%
Fish (including pilchards/tinned)	0.70%	0.80%
Take Away	0.70%	0.00%
Paraffin	0.70%	1.60%
Linen (Towels)	0.70%	0.00%
Hair Dryer	0.70%	0.00%
Juices	0.00%	1.60%
Dog food	0.00%	0.40%
Gas	0.00%	0.40%
Airtime	0.00%	0.40%
Dishes and buckets	0.00%	0.80%
Cigarettes	0.00%	0.40%
Total	100%	100%

Source: Completed surveys

Phoning participants every two days for one month to record purchases confirmed the above trends as summarised in Table 5 in Appendix 2.

49.5% of the SRD grant recipients' and 45.7% of the BEEI participants' purchases are groceries (non-perishable food items). Toiletries and detergents are ranked three and six respectively (Table 5; Appendix 2). The data set suggests that toiletries and detergents are bought monthly, while perishable food items such as diary, vegetables, meat, and fruit are bought more frequently. Table 4 indicates that BEEI participants purchased more dairy products than SRD grant recipients while Table 5 (Appendix 2) shows the opposite. This is attributed to SRD recipients under reporting purchasing of eggs in their most frequent monthly shopping items because it is part of their 'regular' spending. Cold drinks were not mentioned as part of both SRD grant recipients' and BEEI participants' most frequent shopping items during the month, while the telephone calls revealed that they regularly purchase cold drinks. Conversely, clothing was not bought frequently, and the telephone calls confirmed that more BEEI participants purchase.

Only one respondent listed cigarettes as part of monthly shopping and another reported buying wine during the month of the telephone calls recording purchases. Two traders in the study, who sold alcohol, reported that most of their customers receive government grants. One of the alcohol traders specifically report that his customers received the SRD grant and participated in the BEEI. As discussed in the research design section, the study did not probe respondents' recall of shopping lists to ask, 'Do you also buy alcohol or cigarettes?'. The global evidence show that recipients of cash transfers are not spending it on tobacco and alcohol Evans and Popova, 2014). The SRD grant recipients and BEEI participants cumulatively purchase goods and services from 42 different enterprises including local and informal traders. SRD grant recipients shop at 26 different stores/enterprises, while BEEI participants purchase goods and services from 33 different outlets/enterprises.

Mostly SRD grant recipients (44.7%) and BEEI participants (45.4%) shop at supermarkets (Figure 5). Hybrid wholesalers are their second most frequented place to shop at. Patronage of local and informal traders such as hawkers appeared to be less supported as compared to other options. Slightly more SRD grant recipients support local businesses and hawkers (7.9%) than BEEI participants (4.2%). This may be related to more SRD grant recipients (59%) walking to the stores to shop compared to 20% of BEEI participants. Over three quarters (77%) of BEEI participants use taxis to get to the stores. Similarly, more SRD grant recipients (48%) shop within Ikm radius from their homes compared to 29% BEEI participant respondents.



# Figure 5. Places Where SRD Grant Recipients and BEEI Participants Shop



It is notable that at the time of the study more BEEI participants reported shopping online. Responses to the question exploring the use of technology, both SRD grant recipients (10%) and BEEI participants (19.4%) reported that they bought goods and services online. These included buying electricity, toiletries, and hair pieces/weaves amongst others. A few respondents listed Shein, the fast fashion online store that they support. Several BEEI participants (6.5%) in the study also shop at stores that offer credit facilities. One quarter (26%) of BEEI participants buy on credit compared to only 7% of SRD grant recipients in the study. BEEI participants attribute the credit facilities available to them to the stable income that they receive through the employment stimulus programme. Generally both SRD grant recipients and BEEI participants pay in cash; however significantly more BEEI participants (40.5%) pay with credit/ debit cards as shown in Figure 6.



Figure 6. Payment Methods of SRD Grant Recipients and BEEI Participants

Source: Completed Surveys

# 4. Conclusion

The 2022 survey, with more diverse informal and small traders (including more producers) compared to the 2019 study, that was biased towards grocers, confirm that hybrid wholesalers continue to be the main supplier to this economic sector in the 3.5km radius around Philippi. Roughly half of these informal and small traders reported that most of their customers received government grants. They believed that these customers received the child support, followed by the SRD, old age pension, disability, BEEI employment, and war veterans' grants. Nonetheless, these traders identified the lack of customers and high input costs as the biggest risks facing the viability and profitability of their businesses, while in 2019, informal and small traders enumerated crime as the major risk factor to the sustainability of their enterprises. The traders in the 2022 study blamed both the lack of customers on the high levels of unemployment and the high input costs on the COVID-19 lockdowns.

The SRD grant recipients and BEEI participants in the study from around Stock Road in Philippi preferred to shop in the formal sector, namely at supermarkets, hybrid wholesalers, chain stores and in malls than at local stores and informal traders. This may be a result of the respondents being close to Stock Road. More SRD grant recipients shop at local and informal traders than BEEI participants in the study. Several respondents also listed buying online and a few mentioned Shein – the fast-fashion online store. SRD grant recipients and BEEI participants in the main spend on food, household energy, toiletries, and detergents.

One in a quarter (23%) SRD grant recipients and one in ten (10%) BEEI participants in the sample also received the child support grant and three percent of SRD grant recipients were beneficiaries of the old age pension grant. Since this is contrary to the conditions for the SRD grant, there is a need to explore the mechanism that allows citizens to access multiple social welfare grants.

While it is difficult to make inferences about shifts in behaviour of informal and small traders between 2019 and 2022 due to the differences in the sample; the data seems to indicate that there are important changes in the way the sector around Stock Road in Philippi is using technology and also its employment creation capability. More traders in 2022 are using technology in running their businesses, including internet banking, purchasing stock/supplies online, using social media and managing stock. In 2019, informal and small traders were employing more assistants in their enterprise compared to those participating in 2022. Davies and Thurlow (2009, p. vi) in their paper on the economywide linkages between the formal and informal economies show that:

"... unconditional cash transfers stimulate demand for informally produced products, thereby raising informal employment without undermining formal producers".

They further conclude that unconditional cash transfers have pro-poor outcomes. While this study did not engage in econometrics but conducted simple descriptive statistical analysis on purchasing behaviour of informal and small traders and the spending patterns of a small number of SRD grant recipients and BEEI participants in a 3.5km radius around Stock Road in Philippi, it revealed that the linkages between the informal and formal economy was strong and in favour of the latter. Additionally it revealed that beneficiaries of the emergency social protection and employment stimulus measures in response to the COVID-19 pandemic lockdowns were spending online and directly importing products through online retailers like Shein. The study also showed that the informal and small traders around Stock Road in Philippi offered services such as a carwash, manicures, and hairdressers/barbers. These findings show that the Davies and Thurlow's (2009) South African Formal–Informal Model should be revised to include the services sector and online shopping as shown in Figure 7.



Figure 7. Revised Conceptual Framework for the Formal-Informal Economywide Mode

Source: Adapted from Davies and Thurlow (2009, p.6)

While the study employed convenience sampling, the profile of informal and small traders in the 2022 study was different, not only in relation to the goods and services that they offered, but also in their demographic profile. There were more women and young informal and small traders in the sample. Furthermore, two thirds of the respondents started their business because they were unemployed, and the majority existed for less than five years. One respondent reported that he used his R350 from the SRD grant as start-up capital for his carwash business while another shared that she started her fried fish business. This may indicate that the severe effects of COVID-19 on formal employment opportunities together with the social protection and employment stimulus measures may be able to accelerate the growth of the informal and small traders' sector of the economy. Consequently, more research needs to be conducted on these relationships.

The study showed that more traders in 2022 were using technology in many aspects of their enterprise, similar to the results of a small study of fifteen informal traders in Gauteng conducted by Raniga and Ringson in 2022. The role of technology in enhancing informal and small traders' viability and profitability should also be explored in future studies.

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# **Appendix 1.** Research instruments

Г

# Trader Survey 2019/2022

Do you buy from a wholesaler at least once a month?

Yes (continue interview) (1)	No (discontinue interview) (2)	

Dear Trader, my name is \_\_\_\_\_\_. I work for a research company called Infusion. Research is about visiting people and learning from them about their lives, their opinions, and their ideas of making things better for them. Today, we are doing research to learn more about small businesses in Philippi. We want to learn about your purchasing of stock for your business. We will use the information that you give to think about ideas to help small business find easier ways to buy stock. We will never talk about you specifically. This is very important to us. We believe that you as a small trader have lots of knowledge and experience of buying stock, we want to learn from you. Therefore there is no right or wrong answer.

A)

1	Name of Trac	ler					No	ime	of busine	ess					
			20 to	o 25	26 to	30	31 to 3		36 to		41 to 50	5	l to 60	61+	
2	Age of Trade	r	(1	I)	(2)		(3)		(4)		(5)		(6)	(7)	
3	Gender				Fei	male (1	ıle (1)					Male(2)			
	How long hav	/e													
4	you been run		Les	ss thar	1 year (	1)	1 to 2 years (2)				3 to 5 years	(3)	+5 years (4)		
	this business	?													
5	What is your main business?	your main (1) (2) (h			bea prod (hair/n ody)	Selling take away/ oducts ir/nails/b dy) (3) Selling take away/ home- made foods / restaurant (4) Selling clothing / shoes (5) Selling clothing / shoes (5) Selling technology i.e. devices/airt ime (6)					nology e. es/airt	Selling services i.e. hair- dresser/bar ber (7)			
6	Do you have any other businesses?	YES (	YES (1) NO (2)				If YE	S, wh	nat other	' bu	sinesses do y	vou als	o have?	)	
7	Who helps you in your business?	On n	ny owr	n (l)	My far	nily (2)	My	friend	iends (3) My		ly staff (4)		Other (specify) (5)		
8	How many people help you in your business?		1		2		3 4		5	6		7+			
9	Why did you start this business?	Un-e	employ	/ed (1)	Retro	enchm (2)	2) Stay at Home Parent (3)			Enjoy ru own bu (4)	siness		Other Reasons (specify) (5)		
10	What makes business?	it easy	r to rur	n your											
11	What makes business?	it diffic	cult to	run yo	our										
12	What is your business?														
13	What is your business?														
14	How has COVID-19 changed the way you do business?					u IM	PORTA	NT:							
15	How has COV and services			-	product	ts IM	PORTA	NT:							
16	How has the s grant) and th grants) affec	SRD gro e BEEI	ant (C (teach	OVD R ner ass	istant	IM	PORTA	NT:							

# B) Please tell us a bit about your customers:

1	WHO ARE YOUR CUSTOMERS?	MAIN	Family/ Friends (1		Neighb (2)	ours		isser-by m the ai (3)		Stra	ngers	.(4)	-	Other ecify) (5)
2	Since COVID, d have more cus how are relying government g	stomers g on a	Y	es (1)				No (2)		l Don't Know				w (3)
3	Do any of your customers get government g			Yes (	1)		N	o (2)		l Don't Know (3)				
4	If yes, do they represent mos customers?	t of your		Yes (	1)		N	o (2)		l Don't Know (3)				
			Child Sup Grant	(1)		(Pen	sion)		Dis					Veterans (4)
5	Which grants o receive?	do they	Social Rel Distress ( (COVID-19 grant)	Grant 8 R350	:	•	oyme on (Te	ent eacher	Otl		(speci (7)	ify)		
6	Do the same po tend to buy fro regularly?	-	Yes, customers are loyal and come back to buy from my business often (1) No customers are not loyal, many different people all t											
7	What do your customers like your business													
8	What do your customers cor about?	nplain												
	What paymen options to you	allow	Cash	D	edit/ ebit ard	e-wall	et	Snap scan / Zappe	/	EF	Г		SSA ard	Other (specify)
9	your customer		YES NO (1) (2)	YES (1)	NO Y (2) (1			YES NC (1) (2)		;	NO (2)	YES (1)	NO (2)	
10	Do you provide or sell on accor your customer	unt to	YES (1)	NO		f YES, p	lease	explain	n to who	om	and or	n wha	it cond	itions:
11	What would you say is special about your	l offer the best price (1)	best variety (2	variety (2) buy			l always have specials (4)		My shop the be atmo phere		est s- se		er the est vice 6)	l offer credit (7)
	business?	Anything e	else that ma	ıkes y	our busin	ess sp	ecial?	þ						

C) Please tell us about the technology you use to run your business:

1	What phone do you have?			
2	Do you have a computer?	YES (1)	NO (2)	If yes, please explain:
3	Do you use the internet for business?	YES (1)	NO (2)	If yes, please explain:
4	Do you use internet banking?	YES (1)	NO (2)	If yes, please explain:
5	Do you allow customers to pay via credit/debit/SASSA card?	YES (1)	NO (2)	If yes, please explain:
6	Do you allow any digital payment like Snap scan?	YES (1)	NO (2)	If yes, please explain:
7	Do you look for specials on the internet?	YES (1)	NO (2)	If yes, please explain:
8	Does your business have a Facebook /social media account?	YES (1)	NO (2)	If yes, please explain:
9	Do you communicate with your customers using technology? Like WhatsApp messages?	YES (1)	NO (2)	If yes, please explain:
10	Do any of your suppliers use technology to communicate with you?	YES (1)	NO (2)	If yes, please explain:
11	Have you ever bought stock/supplies online?	YES (1)	NO (2)	If yes, please explain:
12	Do you use any technology to manage your stock?	YES (1)	NO (2)	If yes, please explain:
	If no, please explain how you manage y	our stock:		
13	Would you like an APP on your phone that help you manage your business i.e. you can use it to manage your stock and buy stock?	YES (1)	NO (2)	lf yes, please explain:

# D) Please tell us how you buy stock for your business:

												-	1
	What are the main	1	2			3		4		5		6	3
1	stock items that you buy?	7	8			9		10		11		1	2
	Please tell us which	1	2			3		4		5		(	3
	products you buy												
2	that have special												
	requirements i.e.												
	Halaal?		-			_						_	
•	Which places /	1	2			3		4		5		6	3
3	businesses do you												
	buy stock from? Why do you buy from												
	these places? How												
	did you decide to buy												
4	your stock from												
-	these places? Did												
	anyone give you												
	advice?												
	Which place do you	NAME:		REAS	ONS:								
5	like MOST to buy												
-	stock from?												
	Which place do you	NAME:		REAS									
6	like LEAST to buy	NAME.		REAS	0143.								
U	stock from?												
	What special things												Other
_	attract you mostly to	Good		Good		De	livery	Credit (4)		Varie	ety of		(specify)(6)
7	support a certain	prices (1)	sp	pecials	cials (2)		, ces (3)	Crec	dit (4)	stock (5)			
	supplier?							, ,					
			Iha	ve an			-	per/					
	How do you pay for	do you pay for		account		redit/	sn	ap an/			SASSA		Other
8	your stock?	Cash (1)	•	credit) co		Debit	dia	ital	EFT (5	()	ard (		(specify)
	your otook.					ard (3)	-	nent			Curu (		(7)
			(	2)			(4						
•	How often do you buy				re th		Once	a week	Ond	ce ever	y 2		Once per
9	stock?	Daily (1)		once	e a w (2)	eek	(:	3)	w	eeks (4	)		month (5)
	How long are you				-								
10	away from your	Less than		1 to 3	hour	~ (n)		hours	5 t	o 8 hou	rs	Ot	her (specify)
10	business when you	hours (1)		103	nour	s (∠)	(:	3)		(4)			(5)
	are buying stock?							r					
11	How far do you travel	Less than 1k	m (1)	1	to 5	km (2)		5 to 10km (3)					More than
	to buy stock?					()			(-)	<u> </u>		10	)km (4)
	What transport do	()	В	orrow	ed	-			(A)	<u> </u>	(-)		Other
12	you use when you	Own car (I)	wn car (1) car (2)			10	xi (3)	Bus (4)		Irai	Train (E)		(specify)(6)
	are buying stock?	]											

13	What do you LIKE   MOST when buying   stock?	
14	What do you LIKE LEAST when buying stock?	
15	If you can ask your suppliers to improve their service to you, what would you ask them to do?	

16	Are there any products that you wish you could stock in your business that you currently don't have?		YES	(1)		NO (2)	If YES, j about	olease tell us it:
17	What is the BEST treatment you ever received from one of your suppliers?							
18	How far will you travel if you see a good discount or good price?	Less than 1km	(1)	1 to 5 l	xm (2) 5 to 10km (3)		More than 10km (4)	
19	Does anyone delivery stock to you?	YES (1)		NO (2)	If YES, what does this delivery cost you?			
20	Do you use GROUP buying?	YES (1)		NO (2)	or for oth	nly buy for your bus ler businesses as w ne else help you buy	ell?	If YES, please explain

# E) Conclusion

El	Is there anything that you would like to add?	
E2	Is there anything that you would like to ask me?	

Thank you so much for sharing your time, experiences, and knowledge.

# SRD grant recipients (R350) and BEEI participants Survey 2022

Do you receive the R350 Covid grant or are you getting the teacher assistant grant/stipend?

Yes (continue interview) (1)

No (discontinue interview) (2)

Dear respondent, my name is \_\_\_\_\_\_. I work for a research company called Infusion. Research is about visiting people and learning from them about their lives, their opinions, and their ideas of making things better for them. Today, we are doing research to learn more about spending patterns in Philippi. We want to learn about your purchasing patterns. We will use the information that you give to think about ideas to help people buy the products they need. We will never talk about you specifically. This is very important to us. We want to learn from you. Therefore there is no right or wrong answer. A)

1	Age	20 to 25 (1)	26 t	:0 30 (:	2)	31 to 35 (3)	5	36 to	o 40 (4)	4	l to 50 (5)	!	51 to 60 (6)	)	61+ (7)	
2	Gender	Femo	ale (1)			Male	(2)	2) Transgend		ender (3	3)			to say (4)		
3	How long have you been receiving a government grant?	Less than	1 year	(1)	lt	o 2 yea	ars (2	2)	3	to 5 y	ears (3	)	+5 years (4)			
	Which	Child Supp	port Gro	ant (1)	0	Older Persons Gran (Pension) (2)				Dise	ability (	Grant	(3)	3) War Veterans (4)		
4	grants do you receive? Social Relief for Dis Grant (COVID-19 I grant) (5)				Em	Basic Education Employment Interventio (Teacher Assistant) (6)				Other (7)						
5	Would you have been okay if you did not get this money Yes (1) No (2) life								explain	the in	npact c	of the g	grant n	noney	/ on your	
6	Do some sho you credit be government	) No	o (2)	lf	If yes, how does it work?											
7	How many people are <sup>1</sup>					2		3		4	5			6	7+	
8	Do you have a income?	o you have any other ves (1) NO (2) If YES, what other income do you also have?									nave?					
9	How has COV live your life	-		way	you	IMPC	ORTA	NT								
10	How has CO\ and services			produ	ıcts	IMPC	ORTA	NT:								
11	How has the and the BEEI affected who	(teacher ass	sistant	-		ІМРС	ORTA	NT:								
12		How do you pay for your products and					dit/ bit e-wallet rd			nap :an/ :per	EFT		SASSA Card		Other (specify)	
12	Do you some	times buv	(1)	NO (2)	YES (1)	(2)	YES (1)	NO (2)	(1) If YES, pl	(2)	(1) YES	(2)	(1) Whom	(2)	on what	
13	on credit?	etimes buy YES (1) NO (2) If YES, please explain from whom and on whom														
14	most import	uy from a		hav b va	they ve the best iriety (2)	the that i st can		ots ople uy	Do th hav spec (4	ve phere of		Do they offer the best service (6)		Do they offer credit (7)		
	Anything else that makes a business you buy from special?															

# B) Please tell us about the technology you use:

1	What phone do you have?			
2	Do you have a computer?	YES (1)	NO (2)	If yes, please explain:
3	Do you use internet banking?	YES (1)	NO (2)	If yes, please explain:
4	Do you look for specials on the internet?	YES (1)	NO (2)	If yes, please explain:
5	Do you follow businesses on Facebook /social media?	YES (1)	NO (2)	If yes, please explain:
6	Do you communicate with businesses using technology? Like WhatsApp messages?	YES (1)	NO (2)	If yes, please explain:
7	Have you ever bought products online?	YES (1)	NO (2)	If yes, please explain:

# C) Please tell us how you buy products and services:

				-				1			
	What are the main	1 (mostly)	2	3		4		5		6	
1	items that you buy every month?	7	8	9		10		11		12	
	Which places /	1	2	3		4		5		6	
2	businesses do you	(mostly)									
-	buy products and										
	services from?										
	Which place do	NAME:	REASONS:								
3	you like MOST to										
	buy from?										
	Which place do	NAME:	REASONS:								
4	you like LEAST to										
	buy from?			_							
	How often do you		More than	Once a we	ook	0000	ovorv	Or	noo nor		
5	buy products and	Daily (1)	once a week	(3)		Once every 2 weeks (4)		Once per month (5)			
	services?		(2)	(3)		2 WEEKS (4)		monar(0)			
	How far do you	less									
6	travel to buy	than	1 to 5 km (2)	5 to 10km (3)		More than 10km (4)					
0	products and	1km (1)	110 5 km (2)								
	services?										
	What transport do	l walk to								Othe	)r
7	you use when are	the shops	Own car	Borrowed	т	axi (4) Bus		(5) Train (6)			
/	buying products	(1)	(2)	car (3)		uni (4)	DUS	(3)	110111(0)	(5)	''y <i>)</i>
	/services?	(1)								(/)	

# D) Conclusion

1	Is there anything that you would like to add?	
2	Is there anything that you would like to ask me?	

Thank you so much for sharing your time, experiences, and knowledge.

# Appendix 2. Supporting data

# Table 5. Diary of Monthly Goods and Services Purchased by SRD Grant Recipients and BEEI Participants

Items	SRD (n=30)	BEEI (n=31)
Non-perishable groceries (coffee, sugar, oil, pasta, bread, beans, flour, sugar, milk	49.50%	45.70%
powder, spices, sweets, biscuits, and crisps, etc.)	49.50%	45.70%
Diary (cheese, milk, margarine, yoghurt, butte, amazi, eggs)	16.80%	13.90%
Toiletries including (sanitary towels and sanitiser)	7.00%	5.50%
Meat (chicken, mutton, lamp, pork)	6.50%	6.80%
Vegetables	6.00%	8.50%
Detergents	5.20%	4.60%
Processed meat (polony, burgers, viennas, russians, sausages)	3.30%	3.10%
Fish (including pilchards/tinned)	1.70%	1.50%
Cold drinks	1.70%	2.00%
Electricity	1.60%	1.40%
Fruit	1.50%	1.40%
Paraffin	1.20%	0.90%
Candles	0.60%	0.50%
Apparel (clothes and shoes, underwear, accessories, masks)	0.40%	1.20%
Juices	0.20%	0.70%
Cosmetics	0.20%	0.50%
Vetkoek	0.20%	0.10%
Dog food	0.10%	0.00%
Linen (Towels)	0.10%	0.10%
Airtime/Data	0.10%	0.50%
Baby Food	0.00%	0.10%
Baby diapers	0.00%	0.10%
Medicine	0.00%	0.10%
Wine	0.00%	0.30%
Gas	0.00%	0.10%
Hair Dryer	0.00%	0.00%
Dishes and buckets	0.00%	0.10%
Cigarettes	0.00%	0.20%
Total	100%	100%

Source: Telephone calls

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Éditions Agence française de développement publishes analysis and research on sustainable development issues. Conducted with numerous partners in the Global North and South, these publications contribute to a better understanding of the challenges faced by our planet and to the implementation of concerted actions within the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals.

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