WHAT IS A SPAZA?

A spaza shop is an informal convenience shop. The name spaza derives from township slang meaning an ‘imitation’ of a real shop. For decades spaza shops have played an important facilitative role as sellers of household grocery items. They are also important incubators for entrepreneurship, providing the business foundations for generations of South Africa’s informal entrepreneur families. The FIME project has also been able to bring an additional income stream into the household.

The rationale of the FIME project is to address the pressing need to counter the legal-institutional framework that hinders entrepreneurship and business growth within South Africa’s informal economy. Through new research, SLF seeks to understand the barriers to business growth and employment in the informal economy. Between 2010 and 2013, field research was undertaken in eight sites: Delft South / Eindhoven, ii) Capricorn / Seawinds / Overcome Heights (collectively Vrygrond), iii) Sweet Home Farm and iv) Brown’s Farm and v) Imizamo Yethu in the City of Cape Town, vi) Ivy Park in the City of Johannesburg, vii) Tembisa in the City of Ekurhuleni, and viii) KwaMashu in eThekwini Metro. For information: go to www.livelihoods.org.za/informal/micro-enterprises/