

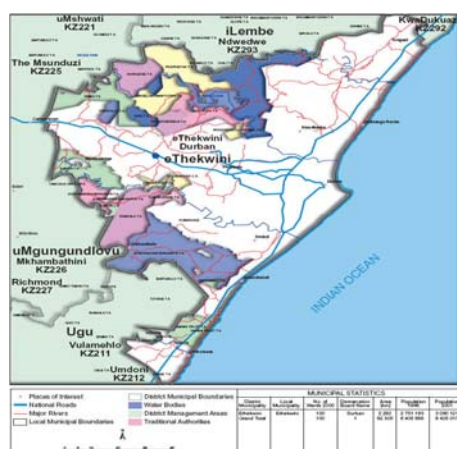


Second Order Water Scarcity in Southern Africa

Welcome to our third newsletter of 2006!¹ This newsletter is designed to be of interest to people concerned about access to and conflict over water resources in Southern Africa. It is being distributed bi-monthly until the end of the project cycle, May 2007. Previous newsletters are available at www.waterscarcity.org.

Inception of eThekwin Case Study

South Africa's social and institutional contexts vary widely. This variability is related to the highly uneven social landscapes residual from apartheid. It is expressed in spatial as well as social terms, not limited to various forms of ghettoization, infrastructure legacies and governance regimes, as well as race, ethnic, class, age, and gender cleavages. Likewise, eThekwin municipality (formerly Durban Metro) is a municipality of contrasts.



¹ If you are on this list it is because you or somebody you know has suggested that you may be interested in the results of this project and/or you have been a direct participant in the project. To suggest further interested parties please email wilsonz@ukzn.ac.za. To unsubscribe to this list please email with the word 'unsubscribe' in the subject line.

A new democratic system of municipal authority for the City of Durban and surrounding areas was ushered in by the December 5, 2000 local government elections. In 1994, South Africa held its first democratic multi-racial elections and in 1996, the country began a broad nation-wide transformation of the municipal system. The goal was to create a wall-to-wall de-centralized system out of the fragmentary and authoritarian apartheid spatial legacy. eThekweni municipality emerged from this process in 2000 from a series of boundary re-demarcations and transitional governance arrangements. The new boundaries reflect both Durban's dominant economic and political position in the sub-region, as well as the functional interdependencies between the region's economic core and previously marginalized areas under apartheid. It also reflects an effort to re-distribute resources from the relatively affluent core to the under-served and economically dependent peripheries. A key feature of this re-demarcation is the inclusion of a sizeable tract of rural and sparsely settled former Traditional Lands, increasing the land mass by 68%, while adding 9% to the population. The municipality now covers an area of 2297 square kilometers. The population of Durban is now approximately 3 million, the majority of which are people of Zulu descent.

Unique Features of the eThekweni Case Study

Research is well underway in this third and final South African case study. There are several important features. First, we are working in partnership with eThekweni Water and Sanitation (EWS). This provides a unique opportunity to bring preliminary South African findings into dialogue with key policy makers as well as for research to inform on-going water and sanitation initiatives.

Second, a large amount of information gathered from over 150 open-ended qualitative interviews around South Africa was used to develop a standardized questionnaire and rapid assessment process.

Finally, the partnership with EWS is linked to a municipal service improvement vision. Research in this final case study is designed to identify key issues and to feed into the improvement strategy. Research is also designed to consolidate community-based Standing Consultative Groups comprising a wide range of community stakeholders – from teachers and clinic personnel to councilors and non-governmental groups – that will meet with the municipality 3-4 times a year for evaluation and roundtable discussions.

Thus, several years of project research is now becoming part of an on-going process to improving water and sanitation services in the city of Durban and surrounding areas.

eThekweni (Durban) is the third largest city in South Africa, the Metropolitan area includes many different kinds of communities: affluent suburbs, formerly racially segregated 'townships', informal settlements and traditional/tribal areas. Water users include households, clinics, hospitals, formal and informal businesses and large industrial water users including Oil refineries and chemical companies. Civil society groups are active and vocal around issues of water pollution and service delivery. The municipal Water Service Provider (WSP) is well capacitated and is pioneering the use of new/alternative technologies to manage water and sanitation.

School teachers share their views



Environmental Health Officer &
Ward Chairman interviewed by Thanda,
community-based research intern



Research focuses on the local dynamics in 3 different kinds of communities, as well as at actors operating at municipal, national and international scales. In the first community - Umlazi AA/BB – 50 interviews were carried out with teachers, health care workers, pastors, business owners community activists, and political leaders. Preliminary assessment of the data suggests that inter-community frictions tends to 'spill over', fuelling concerns about the impact of water use and infrastructure patterns in other

areas impacting on service and pricing at home. Overall, in this area people expressed a high degree of trust in EWS and an pattern of significant service improvement since the early 1990s, people also identified complicated billing and poor understanding of the Free Basic Water Policy, rising water bills and better notice for service interruptions as other key areas of concern. The research team is now working in Newlands East.

Overall, the partnership with EWS has been well received by community members. Community leaders, members, professionals and business people are keen to be involved in research which aims to understand their experiences and frustrations regarding water and sanitation, in order to open a dialogue, designed to feed directly into a service improvement strategy.

Lead researcher for South Africa, Zoë Wilson is joined by Eleanor Hazell, lead field researcher for the previous Mseleni case study, Wiseman Luthuli, Scebi Mkhize and Jason Musyoka, University of KwaZulu Natal students in Development Studies and Biology. 2 local youth also join the project in each area as Research Interns.

As always, we welcome your comments on any aspect of the project.



(from left: Scebi, Deborah and Thanda (both community-based research interns) Eleanor and Lulu from EWS)

Sincerely,

**Zoë Wilson, Lead Researcher, Second Order Water Scarcity in Southern Africa,
South Africa Team**