Responding to Water Insecurity in Durban, South Africa

Supervisory Committee

Dr. Elizabeth Lunstrum

Dr. Robin Roth

August 26, 2011
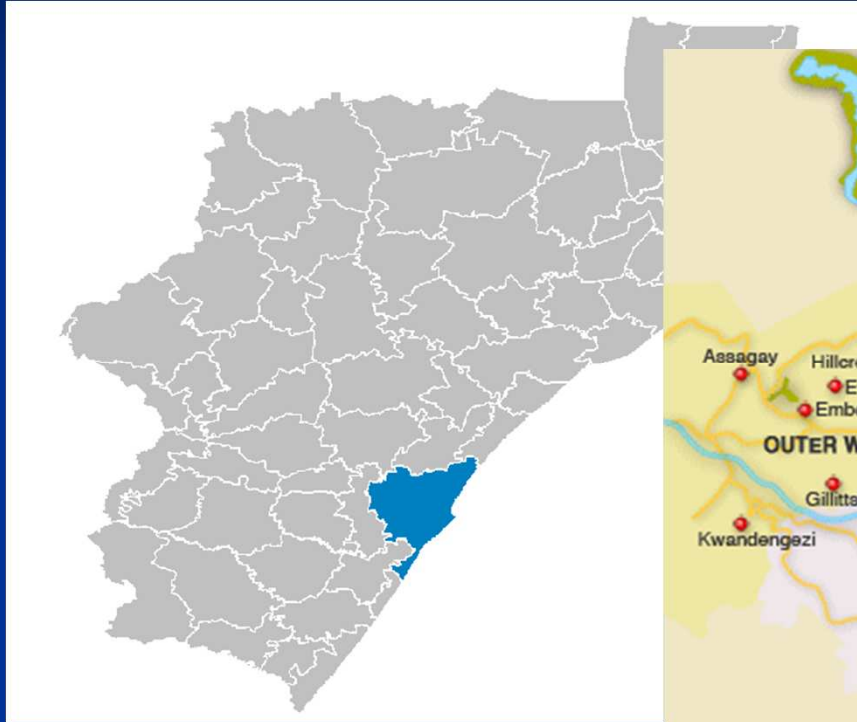
Context

- International praise vs. on-the-ground reality
- Implications
  - Constitution
    - Gender
  - Wasted water
  - Public health

Situating the Field

Situating the Field

South Durban

- Spanning the racial and socio-economic spectrum
- Dumping ground for pollutant industries
- Strong tradition of social movements

Major Research Question

- How do Durban residents respond to water insecurity (e.g. lack of accessibility, availability, or quality) and how does this shape water security in Durban?

Literature Review

- Environmental Justice

  Bond, 2010; Bond & Dugard, 2008; Bond & Ruiters, 2001; Debbané & Keil, 2004; Glazewski, 2002; Harvey, 1996; Ruiters, 2002; Schlosberg, 2004; 2007

- Social Movements

  Barchiesi, 2006; Desai, 2002; Peek, 2002; Robins, 2008; Virno, 2004; 2008; Zuern, 2011

Sub-Questions

- What aspect(s) of water insecurity (e.g. accessibility, availability, or quality) impact Durban residents the most? How does this differ within and amongst residents of Wentworth, uMlazi, and various flats in town?

Sub-Questions

- In what ways do resident responses differ from and inform one another, if at all? Is this related to differences in identity? Do residents organize themselves in sync with Virno's concept of the multitude?

Sub-Questions

- Do residents feel that local NGOs government are representative of their interests? How have the relationships between residents, NGOs, and government changed since 1994?

Sub-Questions

- Do residents address the causes of and solutions to, rather than simply the existence of, water insecurity? How does this tie in with Schlosberg's four pillars of environmental justice: distributive justice; recognition; participation; and capabilities?

Sub-Questions

- What role do local residents play in influencing water security and what, if anything, are they doing to transform this role?

- What changes to water security do residents anticipate facing in the future, and why? What, if anything, are they doing in response to this?

Research Design & Methodology

- Instrumental case study

- Semi-structured interviews

- Document analysis

Limitations

- Outsider status

- Language

- Inexperience

- Time

- Money

Thank you