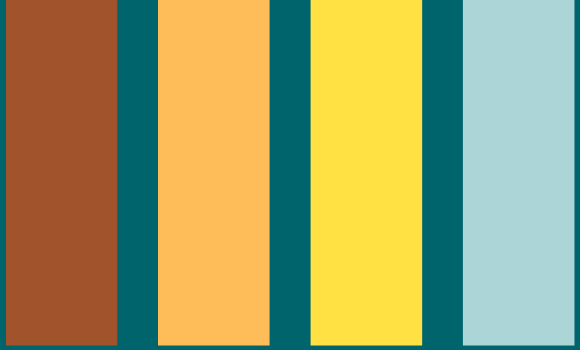


SOCIO-ECONOMIC RISK PROFILE FOR DURBAN



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Resilience

CITY
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Durban’s unequal socio-economic landscape impacts resilience to flooding and results in slow recovery after flood and other disaster events. Key factors include:

Approximately 30% of the population lives below the food poverty line.



Rapid urbanisation, poverty, inequality and weak governance contribute to housing and infrastructure backlogs. Densification transforms catchments, contributing to more intense flood peaks.



High inequality – Gini coefficient of 0.62.



Children, the elderly and disabled individuals face greater risks during disasters and are less likely to recover.



Durban has an unemployment rate of more than 20%.



Public health challenges and limited health care access undermine both physical and mental health, which in turn reduces resilience to other shocks.



Despite these challenges, diverse communities across Durban’s formal and informal settlements are fostering innovation and experimentation in response to climate change, such as creating new partnerships and improving flood preparedness.

Disaster events and gender inequality

Gender inequality heightens vulnerability during and after climate hazards. For example, it can be more difficult for women to contribute to discussions on climate change planning and preparedness and disaster responses can be gender blind (e.g. having non-segregated refuge centres exposes women and girls to violence and assault). Emerging insights show that young men are also often particularly vulnerable and unsupported after hazard events, leaving them susceptible to depression, a feeling of powerlessness and resultant substance abuse. Addressing issues of equality and access to services is critical in protecting the rights enshrined in the country’s Constitution.



GENDER-SPECIFIC SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS IN THE CONTEXT OF DISASTERS

“In our community, after the floods we were left with one toilet that is used by both men and women. In this situation it is easy to get diseases and is unsafe.”

Sebenzani Hlongwa
Quarry Road West
Informal Settlement



The importance of basic services and infrastructure for resilience building

Resilient infrastructure and basic service provision reduces flood impacts and speeds up recovery post a disaster event. For example:

- Water, sanitation, and stormwater systems must be resilient to heavy rainfall to maintain public health and safety.
- Regular waste collection from streams, rivers and canals prevents blockages in culverts and bridges during storms.
- Access to clean water and sanitation is crucial during and after disaster events, but backlogs remain. Only 33% of toilets in informal settlements were properly maintained after the 2022 floods.
- Regular maintenance of infrastructure ensures reliable and safe services during and after floods.



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