

# **South Africa's Drought and the Role of Public Engagement in Water Saving in the City of Tshwane**

**By**

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# Outline

- Background and Purpose
- Stakeholders
- Way Forward



# Background and Purpose

- Regular droughts.
  - Affecting society and the economy.
  - Scientists can forecast droughts.
    - Including this drought because El Niño-induced.
    - Forecasting capability in the, CSIR, SA Weather Services, and Water Research Commission.
- When droughts hit, a popular intervention is water restrictions.
  - Not immediate and desired effect.
  - Department of Water and Sanitation Gazetted a 15% water consumption reduction.





# Background and Purpose (continue)

- Restrictions started on 6 September 2016.
- In Tshwane, by October 3<sup>rd</sup> only 2.6% reduction.
- In March 2017, DWS lifted 50% of the restrictions after good rains.
- Drought not completely broken.
- City of Tshwane will be our main case study.
  - *Thiba Komelelo* (Stop the Drought)
  - Involves technical measures as well as community awareness campaigns.



# Stakeholders

- We will review the *Thiba Komelelo* campaign's effectiveness.
- The media is also very active in highlighting the issue of water savings.
  - Rian van Heerden, Jacaranda FM 94.2 regional radio station.
- So too, the scientific community, particularly CSIR climate change and climate variability scientists.
  - Dr Francois Engelbrecht and Prof Willem Landman.
- Both the media and scientists sought to influence the public's perceptions on the severity of the issue.





# Stakeholders

- Interviews indicate different communication styles.
  - City of Tshwane, ‘hit the message home again and again.’
  - Rian van Heerden and Jacaranda FM’s Project Water Drop in 2016.
    - Water to drought stricken communities in SA’s North West Province.
      - To paint a mental picture of the situation’s seriousness.
    - Naming and shaming Tshwane residential areas using water not sparingly.
    - City of Cape Town – ‘next to the sea, so water is in abundance.’



# Stakeholders

- Scientists' press conference in September 2015 to communicate drought's forecast.
- Roadshows to drought stricken farming communities in SA's Limpopo Province.
  - Observed that some farmers are already experiencing drought.
  - Heart wrenching tales...



# Way Forward

- Planning the *Psychology of Water Use in South Africa's 8 Metropolitan Municipalities*.
  - A household survey in the Metros to gather information.
  - City of Tshwane is very interested.
  - During a meeting with officials – they gave inputs and ideas.
  - Bottom-line: they feel ‘you cannot have a technical solution for a social problem.’





# Thank you for listening

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