

Kasie, Tesfahun. A descriptive analysis of environmental health risks and household livelihoods: A case study in the informal settlement of Khayelitsha TR Section (BSc Honours thesis in Disaster Risk Science, 2007)

Within the city of Cape Town, environmental health risks constitute a major developmental challenge for residents of the city's informal settlements. These risks are reflected in potential impacts resulting from the interplay between environmental health hazards that originate from the settlements' locations and the vulnerable socio-economic conditions of the residents themselves. This research examines the extent of vulnerability conditions underlying environmental health risk and their potential impact on the livelihoods of female-headed households in TR section in Khayelitsha, a small informal settlement in Cape Town. Given the complex bio-physical environment of informal settlements, this study illustrates the need to apply a holistic approach to understanding the impacts of environmental health risks on the health and livelihoods of female-headed households, which were found to be seriously vulnerable to the potential impacts of environmental health risks. It is suggested that the WHO Health Indicator Model and the Sustainable Urban Livelihood Framework should be combined to better understand the subtle and cumulative impacts of environmental health risk in informal settlements. Research of environmental health risks and sustainable urban livelihoods should apply comprehensive and holistic methodologies and models for an improved understanding of complex human-environmental-disaster risk relationships in the context of informal settlements.