

Peter Arthern. A Comparative Study of Participatory and Household Risk Assessments and an Investigation into the Impact of a Participatory Risk Assessment to Effect Change. Case Study: Section D, Sweet Home Farm, Cape Town. (MPhil in Disaster Risk Science, 2011).

This research compared the contributions of Participatory Action Research (PAR) and household surveys to inform understanding of informal settlement risks and the influence of PAR in effecting change. A risk assessment was carried out in Section D, Sweet Home Farm informal settlement, Cape Town, adopting the Pressure and Release Model and the Sustainable Livelihood Framework. The household survey risk assessment employed a traditional social science research approach, using a questionnaire as the main tool, supplemented by a range of spatial, statistical and analytical tools. Although similar to many Cape Town informal settlements, Sweet Home Farm's location on private land was found to be an underlying causal factor for its priority risks, differentiating it from other informal areas. The sustainable livelihoods framework was used to create a household fragility index, which, when integrated with spatial tools, such as GPS and Google Earth, enabled further analysis. Findings from the household survey risk assessment were compared with results from a community risk assessment (CRA) conducted in Sweet Home Farm in 2009 that used a participatory methodology. A comparison of the two approaches identified areas of convergence and divergence as well as the strengths and weaknesses of each. The 2009 CRA described a risk profile in more depth, using less resources in less time. As the CRA had identified solid waste as the priority hazard, the research sought to determine changes in solid waste risk to assess the capacity of PAR to effect change. Most respondents reported a decrease in solid waste related risk, which appeared to be primarily due to improved solid waste management by the City, but this could not be directly attributed to the CRA.