

**DON'T WASTE A  
DROP!**

CAPE TOWN IS DROUGHT-STRICKEN

CAPE TOWN  
INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

**SOUTH AFRICA**  
**CAPE TOWN:**  
**WATER CRISIS**

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THE ARTIFICIAL LAKE OF THEWATERSKLOOF FROM WHICH CAPE TOWN RECEIVES THE MAJORITY OF ITS WATER SUPPLY; IT IS ALMOST HALF EMPTY.



AFTER SCHOOL, SIBUSISO MFUNDI HAS TO GO FILL BUCKETS WITH WATER FOR HIS FAMILY, WHICH LIVES IN THE TOWNSHIP OF PHILIPPI.

- SINCE 2015, THE PROVINCE OF THE WESTERN CAPE, IN PARTICULAR CAPE TOWN, HAS BEEN HIT BY A PROFOUND CRISIS OF WATER RESOURCES. OVER THE LAST THREE YEARS RAIN HAS BEEN ALMOST NON-EXISTENT.
  - 95% OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN METROPOLIS WATER COMES FROM DAMS. THE THEEWATERSKLOOF, THE LARGEST OF THE ARTIFICIAL RESERVOIRS THAT SUPPLY THE CITY, WAS EVEN REDUCED TO ONE TENTH OF ITS TOTAL CAPACITY, WHICH IS THE EQUIVALENT OF 480 BILLION LITRES.
  - AT THE START OF 2018 PEOPLE PREDICTED THE ARRIVAL OF A 'DAY ZERO' IN APRIL. BUT EVEN IF THE WINTER RAINS HELPED TO PREVENT THE DANGER, THE PROBLEM HAS NOT BEEN RESOLVED AS IT IS PRINCIPALLY RELATED TO CLIMATE CHANGE.
  - THE WATER CRISIS HAS FURTHER AGGRAVATED THE SOCIAL DISCREPANCIES BETWEEN RICH SOUTH AFRICANS AND THOSE WHO LIVE IN THE TOWNSHIPS, THE VAST MAJORITY OF WHOM ARE BLACK.
- CAPE TOWN COULD BE THE FIRST IN A LONG SERIES OF METROPOLISES THAT FIND THEMSELVES HAVING TO CONFRONT A LACK OF WATER.

AERIAL VIEW OF CAPE TOWN WITH  
SIGNAL HILL AND TABLE MOUNTAIN.



PROFESSOR KEVIN WINTER OF THE WATER TASK  
TEAM FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN  
PHOTOGRAPHED AT THE WATER HUB PROJECT OF  
FRANSCHHOEK, A PROJECT OF THE UNIVERSITY  
OF CAPE TOWN FOR DEVELOPING AGRICULTURE  
WITH FILTERED AND PURIFIED WASTEWATER.



A CLOSED PUBLIC WATER FAUCET IN THE TOWNSHIP OF KAYELITSHA. MANY SHACKS IN THE TOWNSHIP HAVE NEVER HAD RUNNING WATER, BUT EVEN THE PUBLIC FOUNTAINS HAVE HAD RESTRICTIONS PLACED ON THEM.





THE DAM ON THE BERG RIVER CREATED ONE OF THE ARTIFICIAL RESERVOIRS THAT SUPPLY CAPE TOWN WITH WATER. FORTUNATELY, THE RECENT RAINS HAVE REFILLED MORE THAN 50%, POSTPONING FOR A MOMENT THE DREADED DAY ZERO, WHEN NO MORE WATER WILL COME FROM THE TAPS AT HOME.



INSIDE MAMA AFRICA, ONE OF THE BARS ALONG CENTRALLY LOCATED LONG STREET. IN ALL PUBLIC BARS THE WATER SUPPLY IN THE BATHROOMS HAS BEEN CUT OFF AND CHEMICAL PRODUCTS HAVE BEEN PROVIDED FOR PEOPLE TO CLEAN THEIR HANDS.



A STICKER INSIDE A PUBLIC BATHROOM INFORMING PEOPLE THAT THE WATER SUPPLY HAS BEEN CUT OFF AND CHEMICAL PRODUCTS HAVE BEEN PROVIDED FOR ONE TO CLEAN ONE'S HANDS.

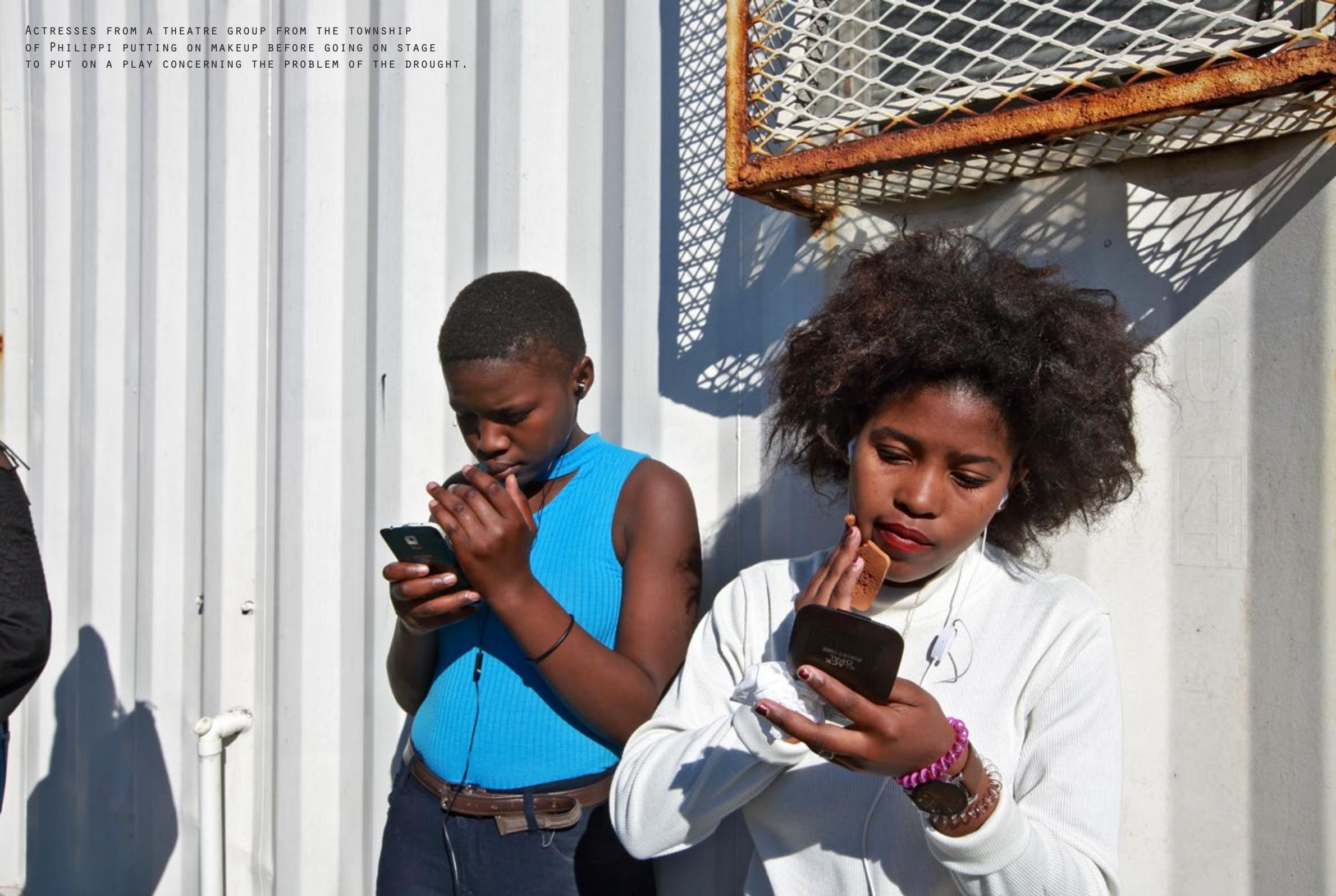
A LINE OF PEOPLE WAITING TO FILL THEIR BUCKETS WITH WATER IN THE TOWNSHIP OF PHILIPPI. MOST OF THE SHACKS IN THIS INFORMAL SETTLEMENT DO NOT HAVE RUNNING WATER AND EVEN THE PUBLIC FOUNTAINS HAVE HAD RESTRICTIONS PLACED ON THEM.



THE ARTIFICIAL LAKE OF THEEWATERSKLOOF FROM WHICH CAPE TOWN RECEIVES THE MAJORITY OF ITS WATER SUPPLY; IT IS ALMOST HALF EMPTY.



ACTRESSES FROM A THEATRE GROUP FROM THE TOWNSHIP  
OF PHILIPPI PUTTING ON MAKEUP BEFORE GOING ON STAGE  
TO PUT ON A PLAY CONCERNING THE PROBLEM OF THE DROUGHT.



ROOIBOS (A BUSH FROM WHICH IS OBTAINED A DRINK THAT IS SIMILAR TO TEA) PLANTATIONS IN THE REGION OF THE WESTERN CAPE. AGRICULTURE HAS SUFFERED HEAVY LOSSES DUE TO THE DROUGHT AND RELATED WATER RESTRICTIONS AND MANY FARMERS HAVE LOST THEIR JOBS.



THE MOBILE CLINIC OF MSF (MÉDECINS SANS FRONTIÈRES) IN THE TOWNSHIP OF KAYELITSHA. THE WATER CRISIS HAS ALSO ACCENTUATED HEALTH PROBLEMS IN THE POORER POPULATIONS.





TABLE MOUNTAIN. VARIOUS SOURCES OF WATER ARISE FROM THE SLOPES OF THE MOUNTAIN; HOWEVER, THEY ARE DISPERSED IN THE OCEAN WITHOUT BEING USED.

OVER THE LAST THREE YEARS CAPE TOWN, THE THIRD MOST POPULATED CITY IN SOUTH AFRICA, HAS EXPERIENCED AN EXTREMELY SERIOUS DROUGHT CAUSED PRIMARILY BY CLIMATE CHANGE, WHICH, TOGETHER WITH CORRUPTION, POLITICAL INSTABILITY AND AN INCREASE IN THE POPULATION, HAS IN TURN CAUSED A MAJOR WATER CRISIS: FOR A NUMBER OF WEEKS, FOR EXAMPLE, THERE WAS NO WATER TO BE FOUND IN THE SUPERMARKETS AND THE THEEWATERSKLOOF, THE LARGEST OF THE SIX ARTIFICIAL RESERVOIRS THAT SUPPLY THE CITY, HAD BEEN REDUCED TO A TENTH OF ITS TOTAL CAPACITY OF 480 BILLION LITRES.

THE 'DAY ZERO' OF NO WATER WAS ORIGINALLY ENVISIONED FOR APRIL 2018, BUT THANKS TO THE RESTRICTIONS IMPOSED BY THE MUNICIPALITY AND TO THE LIGHT RAINS OVER THE LAST TWO MONTHS A BIT OF TIME HAS BEEN BOUGHT. NEVERTHELESS, THE PROBLEM HAS NOT BEEN RESOLVED: THE DAMS STILL HAVE NOT REACHED THE APPROPRIATE LEVEL OF WATER AND RESTRICTIONS ON WATER USE ARE STILL IN EFFECT.

THE CRISIS HAS HAD SEVERE SOCIAL REPERCUSSIONS: IF A HOUSEHOLD SITUATED IN ONE OF THE WEALTHIER RESIDENTIAL AREAS EXCEEDS ITS DAILY LIMIT, IT MUST SIMPLY PAY A FINE; IN THE INNER-CITY, HOWEVER, METERS HAVE BEEN INSTALLED WHICH BLOCK SUPPLY UNTIL THE FOLLOWING DAY. THESE INEQUALITIES HAVE INCREASED UNEASE IN LARGE SEGMENTS OF THE POPULATION AND, IN THE MEANWHILE, THE TOWNSHIPS HAVE TRULY IMPOSED 'DAY ZERO': THE MUNICIPALITY IN FACT CLOSED ALL PUBLIC WELLS WHERE, EVERY DAY, PEOPLE LINE UP TO FILL THEIR BUCKETS TO TAKE BACK TO THEIR WATERLESS HOUSES. IN ADDITION, THE COST OF WATER HAS GONE UP, THUS FURTHER IMPACTING THE POOREST SEGMENTS OF SOCIETY.

THIS IS A CRISIS THAT HAS TAUGHT, AND CONTINUES TO TEACH, THE INHABITANTS OF CAPE TOWN A LOT. THEY HAVE BEGUN TO ORGANISE THEMSELVES IN ORDER TO FACE THE DAY WHEN THERE WILL NO LONGER BE ANY WATER, A RESOURCE THE MOST AFFLUENT CITIZENS HAVE ALWAYS TAKEN FOR GRANTED, AS OPPOSED TO THOSE WHO LIVE IN THE SHANTYTOWNS. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE GOVERNMENT HAS CONSTRUCTED DESALINATION PLANTS AND LAUNCHED PROJECTS FOR THE CREATION OF NEW DAMS. IN THIS WAY THE SOUTH AFRICAN CITY IS SET TO BECOME AN EXAMPLE: CLIMATE CHANGE IS, IN FACT, BECOMING OF INTEREST TO THE ENTIRE GLOBE AND CAPE TOWN COULD BE THE FIRST IN A LONG SERIES OF METROPOLISES THAT WILL HAVE TO DEAL WITH THE SAME PROBLEMS.

TEXT BY VALENTINA GIULIA MILANI



LIKHOON BOOI LIVES WITH HIS MOTHER IN A SHACK IN THE TOWNSHIP OF PHILIPPI. EVERY DAY HE HAS TO GO TO THE PUBLIC FOUNTAIN TO GET WATER.

VIEW OF THE TOWNSHIP OF KAYELITSHA, WITH WASTEWATER AND PUBLIC TOILETS. IN ADDITION TO THE PROBLEM OF THE LACK OF WATER IN CAPE TOWN, THERE IS A PROBLEM WITH THE USAGE OF POLLUTED WATER BY THE POOREST OF ITS CITIZENS.





THE LINE OF PEOPLE WAITING TO  
FILL THEIR BOTTLES AND WATER  
BUCKETS AT THE PUBLIC FOUNTAIN  
OF THE QUARTER OF NEWLAND.



THE ARTIFICIAL LAKE OF THEEWATERSKLOOF FROM WHICH CAPE TOWN RECEIVES THE MAJORITY OF ITS WATER SUPPLY; IT IS ALMOST HALF EMPTY.

VIEW OF THE CITY CENTER AND THE WATERFRONT  
OF CAPE TOWN AS SEEN FROM SIGNAL HILL.





TO CONFRONT THE PROBLEM OF DROUGHT, THE MUNICIPALITY OF CAPE TOWN HAS LAUNCHED A NUMBER OF PILOT PROJECTS WITH DESALINIZATION PLANTS. IN THE PHOTO: THE STRAND FONTEIN PLANT.



PEOPLE IN LINE TO FILL UP BOTTLES AND JUGS AT THE PUBLIC FOUNTAIN  
IN THE QUARTER OF NEWLAND.



PEOPLE WAITING TO FILL THEIR BUCKETS WITH WATER IN THE TOWNSHIP OF PHILIPPI.  
MOST OF THE SHACKS IN THIS INFORMAL SETTLEMENT DO NOT HAVE RUNNING WATER  
AND EVENTHE PUBLIC FOUNTAINS HAVE HAD RESTRICTIONS PLACED ON THEM.



A PART OF THE TOWNSHIP OF KAYELITSHA CONSTRUCTED IN A MARSHY ZONE. IN ADDITION TO THE PROBLEM OF THE LACK OF WATER IN CAPE TOWN, THERE IS A PROBLEM WITH THE USAGE OF POLLUTED WATER BY THE POOREST OF ITS CITIZENS.



FARMERS AT THE END OF A WORKDAY IN WESTERN CAPE. AGRICULTURE HAS SUFFERED HEAVY LOSSES DUE TO THE DROUGHT AND RELATED WATER RESTRICTIONS AND MANY FARMERS HAVE LOST THEIR JOBS.



**URBAN FREEDOM**

A GREENHOUSE IN THE SUBURBS OF CAPE TOWN.



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