

# Justice implications of household access to alternative water and electricity sources

Loadshedding, water cuts and drought have placed electricity and water access foremost in Gauteng residents' minds. In 2022, GCRO Maps of the Month showed how affluent households in Gauteng are less affected by **electricity** and **water** interruptions than poor households.

This vignette explores the extent to which residents are turning to alternative electricity and water sources. The data reveal that, although increasing over time, only a small minority of Gauteng residents ( $\pm 1$  in 20) have access to alternative water and electricity. Affluent households are proportionately more likely to invest in these alternatives than poorer households. As a result, the gap is widening between wealthier households who are able to shield themselves from electricity and water interruptions, and poorer households who cannot afford to do so.

Additional links: [Water interruptions in Gauteng](#)  
[Electricity interruptions in the Gauteng City-region](#)  
Related GCRO research project: [Off-grid cities](#)

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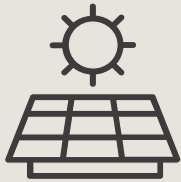
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**Data source**

GCRO Quality of Life Survey 6 (2020/21),  
4 (2015/16) & 3 (2013/14)

## Household access to alternative electricity and water sources increasing over time

### Solar or wind energy



0.8%

2013/14

5%

2020/21

### Generator



0.3%

2013/14

4%

2020/21

### Rainwater tank



3%

2013/14

6%

2020/21

### Borehole / well



N/A

2013/14

5%

2020/21

## Still, only 1 in 20 households have access to alternative water or electricity



## Affluent households are more likely to have access to alternative water sources

### Rainwater tank



2%

Income  
< R3 201  
/ month

4%



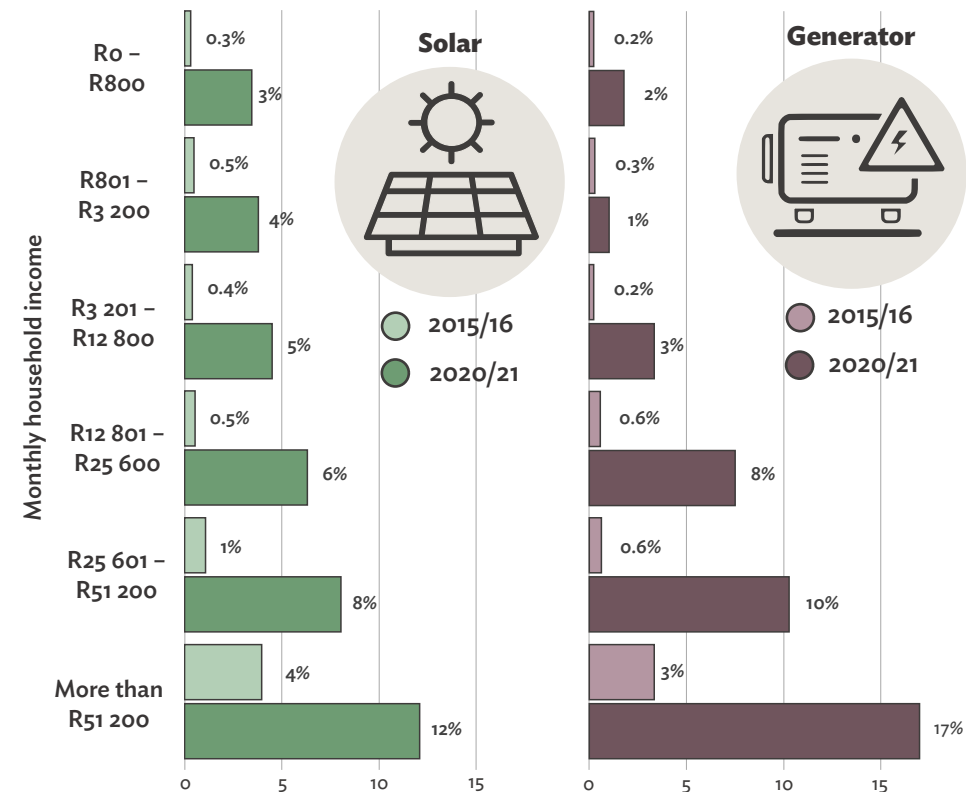
### Borehole / well

9%

Income  
> R25 600  
/ month

9%

## Over time, wealthier households have accessed alternative electricity substantially more than poorer households



While some of these power alternatives (e.g. solar energy) are environmentally desirable, others (e.g. generators) are not.