



INTERNET ARTICLE

DWS pioneers development of the knowledge management culture in the water and sanitation sector

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The Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) became a trailblazer when it moved a step closer to developing a sector-wide Knowledge Management Strategy that will serve as a springboard for improved service delivery.

To get the input of relevant stakeholders in the process of developing the Strategy, DWS held its Knowledge Management Strategy National Consultation on 07 December 2017 at the Birchwood Hotel in Boksburg, Ekurhuleni.

DWS's Corporate Services Deputy Director-General, Mr Squire Mahlangu, said human beings had the ability to think and that their faculty to apply knowledge made them unique.

Mr Mahlangu said the fact that different stakeholders had gathered with the aim of developing the knowledge management strategy would ensure that knowledge of water and sanitation in the sector was utilised not only for today but to benefit future generations.

Explaining the purpose of the consultation, Water Policy Acting Chief Director, Mr Tenda Rasikhanya, said the aim of the consultation was to get every relevant person to contribute to the development of the strategy for the sector towards implementing knowledge management.

He said the draft strategy, which the DWS had been working on, was merely a living document which required inputs from all like-minded people and institutions in the sector.

Rasikhanya emphasised that DWS as a leader in the water sector had to play a leading role in making sure that decisions affecting the sector were taken on the basis of the strategy which must capture the voices of other role players.

Presenting on Knowledge Management, Ms Nwabiso Fundzo, said although the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) was in the final stages of developing a knowledge management framework for the public sector, the DWS has taken an initiative to develop an all-inclusive strategy for the water sector.

Ms Fundzo said the development of the strategy was informed by the need for more coordination and collaboration between stakeholders operating in the water sector and the need to gather, preserve and share data and information to produce knowledge products that would make the sector more efficient and effective.

She said the goal behind the strategy was to give direction to the sector in terms of implementing knowledge management and ensuring that knowledge and information within the sector was identified, captured, stored, shared, transferred and reused and thereby creating a learning culture in the water and sanitation sector.

Ms Fundzo said: "Some of the challenges that the strategy seeks to address are issues such as the underutilisation of expert knowledge and the need for knowledge transfer. This also



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includes the need to develop and share more case studies and good practices and the exploitation of available research for evidence based policy and decision making.”

She said the current legislation which governs the water and sanitation sector does not prevent DWS from implementing knowledge management, adding that the DWS was compelled by section 32 of the Constitution to provide for the right to access of information.

To create knowledge management culture in the water and sanitation sector, Ms Fundzo said, the Knowledge Management Strategy should ensure that knowledge management is considered as an integral part of the mandate of the sector and is used as a strategic mechanism to achieve the goals of the sector.

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