



DEPUTY MINISTER'S SPEECH

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL 6 (SDG6) MID TERM REVIEW

22 FEBRUARY 2023

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Distinguished Water and Sanitation sector partners

Ladies and gentleman

It is a pleasure to be given the opportunity to present to you today and share South Africa's progress with regards to SDG6 with the objective to “**ensure availability of, and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all**”. This SDG6 Mid Term Review marks the halfway point of this 14-year Program towards its completion by 2030.

Following the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which concluded in 2015, the UN SDGs began in 2016 endorsed by all Heads of State, including South Africa. STATS South Africa (STATSSA) was given the mandate to coordinate all 17 SDGs in the country, including that of SDG6. Each of the SDGs were given a lead Department to take ownership and deliver on their respective Goal, many of whom are represented here today. SDG6 in particular, was given to the Department of Water and Sanitation whom has been busy implementing the program since its inception and ably coordinated by Mark Bannister, our Chief Engineer in Water Services and implemented by his excellent team of Professionals who are here with us today

The event is a celebration from where we have come over the first 7 years whilst at the same time acknowledging the areas where the sector has underperformed and creating ideas of how we can accelerate the process and maximise our impact towards the 2030 Goals.

This event will unpack opportunities to overcome challenges and accelerate delivery within the eight SDG6 Targets towards 2030

Critically, this event must obtain commitment by the sector to improve delivery of the SDG6 Programme within South Africa.



Outcomes of the Review will also inform the status of SDG6 in South Africa in preparation for those attending the UN Water Conference in New York (22-24 March 2023). South Africa will be represented by Minister Mchunu at this prestigious event.

BACKGROUND

Sustainability of South Africa's water and sanitation infrastructure is crucial for the continued and reliable provision of water and sanitation services to the people of the country.

South Africa has come a long way since the birth of democracy in 1994. In terms of the basic provision of water services for example, South Africa has increased delivery from 64% in 1994 to 88% in 2022.

The SDG6 provision however measures **Safely Managed** Supply which also considers Drinking water from an improved water source which is located on premises, available when needed and free of faecal and priority chemical contamination. This figure currently stands at 66% in South Africa, with the greatest deficit laying in our rural communities and requires critical investment and acceleration by the sector if South Africa is to reach the 100% Goal in the coming 7 years.

Lack of effective Infrastructure Asset Management and the ability to collect Revenue for the sale of water remains a serious concern. The reality is that 30% of current water services infrastructure is experiencing different levels of dysfunctionality – 10% of the 30% quoted are totally dysfunctional and with no water flowing. In terms of Wastewater Treatment Works - 66% of WWTW's are requiring short to medium term intervention, 35% requiring capacity upgrades and 56% requiring additional skilled operating and maintenance staff. These challenges exist first and foremost due to poor or no Infrastructure Asset Management being applied by our Water Service Authorities, including little or no Operation and Maintenance. This shortfall is experienced all over South Africa and needs addressing urgently.

With regards to Sanitation, the Basic Level of Service for sanitation currently stands at 83% which includes the use of improved facilities which are not shared with other households.

The SDG6 **Safely Managed** Sanitation figure currently stands at 73% and includes the requirement of Faecal Sludge Management. Safely managed also requires the use of improved facilities which are not shared with other households and where excreta are safely disposed in situ or transported and treated off-site. Safely managed includes household use of handwashing facilities besides.

South Africa is currently driving the Sustainable Development Goal 6 programme throughout South Africa with its sector partners and aligning the activities with those of the National Water and Sanitation Master Plan, the National Water Resource Strategy and the National Development Plan for achievement by 2030.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL 6



The DWS is responsible for coordinating the delivery of SDG 6 in South Africa whilst providing further support to the water and sanitation of the other 16 SDGs, including those related to education, health and economic development for example, since water and sanitation is central to the success of all Goals and their contribution towards a capable State.

South African SDG6 Success Stories

South Africa has developed arguably the most effective operational structure for the implementation of SDG6 on the African continent. It is a logical design that includes experts that cover all the different disciplines required to achieve Target and Indicator objectives and implemented with a systematic approach that identifies respective gaps and offers interventions to close those gaps through South Africa's National Water & Sanitation Master Plan (NW&SMP) and the National Water Resource Strategy (NWRS) in particular. In addition the structure has brought in a number of cross-cutting Task Teams that include critical inclusion of issues such as Climate Change, Interlinkage (Synergies and Trade-Offs) with the other 16 SDGs in terms of their water and sanitation needs and sector involvement – the sector being critical for closure of the projects aligned with the NW&SMP.

Inclusivity is paramount. Not just within the SDG6 Programme but within the whole business of our sector and the Department of Water and Sanitation seeks to maximise the awareness and involvement of Disability, Youth and Gender in particular, within all that it does and all that it stands for.

Through the process highlighted thus far, there have been many success stories to share, and outputs achieved, including, and not limited to:

- ✓ Water Services Improvement Plan (WSIP) - To date, national government support and intervention related to municipal water and sanitation services has not been sufficiently effective to stop the decline in these services, and national government must take responsibility for this. In response, DWS is putting in place a Water Services Improvement Programme to strengthen its support and intervention at municipal level. The aim of the programme is to make DWS support and intervention more consistent and systematic as opposed to the current ad-hoc approach
- ✓ DWS has established a Water Partnerships Office in collaboration with the Development Bank of South Africa (DBSA) and the South African Local Government Association (SALGA), to support municipalities with financial structuring, feasibility studies and contracting with the private sector, to harness private sector skills and commercial and blended finance for PPPs for water and sanitation services
- ✓ The development of the National Sanitation Integrated Plan provides a 10-year roadmap for ensuring access to adequate sanitation services per province by 2030, providing solutions for addressing sanitation challenges in the sector including eradicating open defecation, and creating a pathway to generate economic opportunities.
- ✓ The development of the National Faecal Sludge Management Strategy is to guide the sector on safe management of faecal sludge to improve operation and maintenance of non-skewed sanitation systems, prevent contamination of water resources, safeguard public health, and protects the environment from pollution across the sanitation value chain.
- ✓ Establishment of a Sanitation Technology Technical Coordination Committee. The committee ensures a coordinated, facilitated, and standardised process for sanitation technology uptake,



which is fair, transparent, inclusive, and able to remove obstacles that delay uptake, adoption, and implementation of innovative sanitation systems. Furthermore, a draft Sanitation Technology Uptake Protocol has been developed to guide innovators and the sector on the standard process for assessment and validation of new technologies.

- ✓ National Groundwater Monitoring Programme has been implemented which is the feeder to the assessment of SDG targets/ indicator as far as groundwater quality.
- ✓ DWS recognises the criticality of Water Conservation and Demand Management and its contribution towards water use efficiency. By minimising non-revenue water such as high leakages, it removes the burden and capital expenditure of new infrastructure requirements. A number of initiatives have been institutionalised within the busies to curb the challenges and address the requirements of SDG6.4.
- ✓ SDG Interlinkage Task Team was initiated to identify the water and sanitation requirements of the other 16 SDGs and unpack the synergies and trade-offs of each. A Tools has been developed to drive this process. Requirements of other SDGs can then be incorporated within the NW&SMP to assist other SDGs in achieving their own Goals.
- ✓ The development of a Project Dashboard Development – the focus being to have an electronic system that reflects all information of projects in a Dashboard application format that everyone will have access to.
- ✓ Reviewing the Infrastructure Asset Management (IAM) Framework & Strategy whilst rolling out support to all 144 Water Service Authorities in South Africa to develop their own 5 Year Plans and implement each accordingly
- ✓ The Department of Fisheries, Forestry and Environment has produced a 2018 National Biodiversity Assessment, (NBA) report contains an updated wetland map used for reporting wetland and estuarine extent. The report provides the state of the country's biodiversity which assist in knowing where the problems are. This promotes the development of policy and strategies for the protection of the environment as well as water resources. Work is underway to review the 2018 NBA report.

SDG 6 Progress 2023

Currently, South Africa is behind in three of the key Targets, namely 6.1 (Clean Water), 6.2 (Sanitation), 6.3 (Water Quality) in particular– these are of most concern and are unlikely to reach their Targets without an investment of **R130 billion / annum in infrastructure over the next 8 years and so far there is a 33% shortfall compared to secured funding** – this is a Critical challenge and a gap that must be bridged to ensure sufficient and sustainable infrastructure for our future generation.

While the DWS is responsible for providing leadership, coordination and accountability to the UN, the various Water and Sanitation sector stakeholders are responsible for achieving the SDG6 Targets. This can be attained through adherence to the requirements of the NW&SMP and the NWRS3, strong leadership, sufficient infrastructure investment, more effective Water Service Authorities, and strategic intrusions by all sector stakeholders. Utilizing principles from within the SD6 Acceleration Framework will also catalyse our interventions to overcome any challenges that lay ahead.

South African SDG6 Challenges



SDG6 is a Sector Programme, not a DWS program, and without the commitment, investment, delivery, and performance of ALL Sector role players, then South Africa will not achieve the SDG6 Goal by 2030. This is the reality. Local Government and in particular the 144 Water Services Authorities in the country are arguably the most critical members in reaching this achievement, and yet the majority of WSA's are seriously underperforming due to lack of resources, money, skills, management systems, people and processes to implement projects effectively and with the speed that is required. Their own participation and understanding of the SDG6 programme is minimal and this is reflected in their poor planning of Water Service Development Plans that must be aligned with the National Water and Sanitation Master Plan and the SDG6 Targets alike; and yet in most cases they do not

Entwined within the SDG6 Programme and issues of sustainability, is the fundamental science of Infrastructure Asset Management. In 2012 the Department produced the Infrastructure Asset Management Strategy which has since been complimented with a Guideline to Water Service Authorities on how to develop their own 5 Year Infrastructure Asset Management Plan – a legal requirement of all Water Service Authorities to revise annually. SDG6 relies heavily on the sector in their disciplined and effective implementation of Infrastructure Asset Management regarding South Africa's water and sanitation infrastructure, and their ability to generate revenue from the service provided. In many Water Service Authorities issues of Maintenance is 'reactive' rather than 'planned' which is not sustainable financially nor technically. Priority must be given by WSAs to budget for and resource Planned Maintenance to reduce unnecessary costs and service failures in future, whilst maximizing sustainability of our water and sanitation infrastructure. It must also be clear that in the words of Nelson Mandela 'A Plan without Action is just a Dream' and therefore implementing such key issues by the Water Service Authorities through the SDG6 Programme and delivery by the Sector to address the Gaps, is essential for our triumph.

The recent Covid 19 Pandemic has had a devastating impact on South Africa's population and its economy over recent years – poor health & hygiene practices have been a major contributing factor towards the spread of the virus. The achievements of SDG6 and the objectives of this programme, have however contributed significantly towards flattening the curve for Covid-19.

The increase in load shedding throughout South Africa has also had a detrimental impact on the delivery of both water and sanitation services, which in turn has damaged the economy and health of our citizens and must be addressed urgently. Our President, Mr. Cyril Ramaphosa said at the recent State of the Nations (SONA) address that the electricity state of disaster will remove 'unnecessary bureaucratic obstacles' to allow this challenge to be addressed with speed.

In Conclusion

The success of the National Water and Sanitation Master Plan and the National Water Resource Strategy is imperative to the success of SDG6 and vice versa. Alignment by the whole sector with these two documents must be complied with if the sector is to move together in the same direction. Operative and fully compliant Water Service Authorities and the implementation of effective municipal Water Services Development Plans (WSDPs) is critical in the management and compliance of all our



Water and Wastewater Treatment Plants and Water and Sanitation Services infrastructure. Infrastructure will be far more sustainable with the implementation of effective Infrastructure Asset Management, together with a robust Revenue Management system; improved legislation and by-laws to provide the necessary teeth in ensuring compliance by the Sector. DWS is working very closely with GoGTA in addressing such challenges. Sufficient investment is essential in providing all infrastructure and service requirements, municipal capacity, accountability, and the provision of an effective workforce. Addressing such fundamental issues are vital to the success of SDG6.

The SDG6 Programme is not a DWS programme – it is a **sector programme** and the sector, as well as DWS, must perform if the SDG6 Goal is to be achieved by 2030. It requires a consolidated effort and a commitment of resources from all stakeholders to have success – DWS is fully committed to make sure that South Africa delivers.

I would like to wish you an enjoyable and productive 2 days at this SDG6 Mid Term Review and to encourage Sector members to commit to actions that evolve from discussions so that we can ALL make a difference towards achieving the 2030 Goals.

In this SDG6 Programme we can either win together or we can lose together, and for the Department of Water and Sanitation, and the Sector in its entirety, the latter is not an option!

I thank you.