



**DWS** SCHOOL  
INTERVENTION

Concept Document

# WATER AND SANITATION EDUCATION PROGRAMME (WSEP)

WATER IS LIFE - SANITATION IS DIGNITY

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**water & sanitation**

Department:  
Water and Sanitation  
**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**



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## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATION

AE	Aqua Enduro
BLM	Baswa Le Meetse
CAPS	Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements
CP	Career Promotion
CS	Curriculum Support
CSD	Celebration of Special Days
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DWS	Department of Water and Sanitation
IP	Intervention Project
LA	Learning Academy
NA	National Adjudication
NSP	National Sanitation Policy
NWPR	National Water Policy Review
NWRS	National Water Resources Strategy
PS	Public Speaking
SFWS	Strategic Framework for Water Services
2020 VFWSEP	2020 Vision for Water and Sanitation Education Programme
WSCCP	Water and Sanitation Climate Change Policy
WSEP	Water and Sanitation Education Programme
WWMD	World Water Monitoring Day

## 1 PROGRAMME BACKGROUND

The preamble of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (Act 106 of 1996) commits all to a deliberate programme of improving the quality of life of all citizens and to free the potential of each person. To the effect of realizing this constitutional commitment, the Departments of Water and Sanitation (DWS) is implementing a water and sanitation education programme named the Water and Sanitation Education Programme (WSEP), to unlock the potential of learners across the South African public schooling system and its community stakeholders.

The DWS is implementing a water and sanitation education programme called the WSEP. The Programme is aimed at educating schools and communities about water use efficiency, management of toilet facilities, protection of water resources, health and hygiene for a healthy life, and water safety. It engages learners and educators in various educational projects.

## 2 THE LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

The WSEP as the programme does not exist for its own sake, it is a deliberate support measure by DWS to assist in the realization of its legislated mandate and policy goals. Sections 2.1 and 2.3 below refer to some of the key legislative and policy foundations to which this programme is anchored.

### 2.1 LEGISLATIVE MANDATE

#### 2.1.1 The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996

The water services provision is the constitutional function of local government, however, sections 154(1) and 155(7) of the Constitution provides that national and provincial governments government have a duty, using, "other measures, must support and strengthen the capacity of municipalities to manage their affairs, to exercise their powers and to perform their functions."

The Bill of Rights further imposes a duty on the state to ensure that everyone has access to sufficient water, section 27(1)(b), and basic and further education, section 29(1)(a)(b).

#### 2.1.2 Water Services Act (No. 108 of 1997)

Section 9 of Water Services Act [No. 108 of 1997] empowers the minister of water and sanitation to develop and maintain standards related to water and sanitation provision. In 2013, the then minister of Water Affairs (now Water and Sanitation) published in government gazette (36958) draft Regulations relating to Compulsory National Standards for Process Controllers and Water Services Works (Regulation 813) to replace Regulation 2834 published in terms of Water Act [No. 54 of 1956].

These regulations seek to standardise skills and capacity requirements for the operation of water services work across the republic.

#### 2.1.3 National Water Act (No. 36 Of 1998)

Part 1 of Chapter 2 of the National Water Act charges the Minister of Water and Sanitation with the legislative responsibility of establishing the National Water Resource Strategy (NWRS). In the current, NWRS 2 (2013) is the latest strategy, its chapter 15 (skills and capacity) outlines the strategic challenges and key actions to address them.

### 2.2 POLICY IMPERATIVES

#### 2.2.1 Water and Sanitation Climate Change Policy (2017)

The Water and Sanitation Climate Change Policy [WSCCP] (2017) states that "to [achieve] water security and decent sanitation, as the goal of this policy, various elements of adaptation include the means of implementation (i.e. financial support, capacity building, and technical support) and monitoring data (i.e. biophysical, socio-economic, climate scenarios)."

It further requires the use of appropriate mitigation and adaptation responses, and to continue in building a capacity for climate change science and inform the sector and the public of climate change-related socio-economic challenges and opportunities.

#### 2.2.2 National Sanitation Policy (2016)

The National Sanitation Policy [NSP] (2016) states that a lack of key skills and the capacity gaps in the sanitation sector remains a challenge, it reports the worrying lack of wastewater monitoring in many plants due to lack of trained personnel, that skills levels are generally very low at a local government level. This lack of skills and capacity has a serious concern for the provision of sanitation services.

### 2.2.3 National Water Policy Review (2013)

The National Water Policy Review [NWPR] (2013) also highlights an imperative for the development of the state to ensure the capacity of the water users to use water efficiently in pursuit of developmental objectives.

### 2.2.4 National Water Resources Strategy, Second Edition (2013)

The second edition of NWRS II (2013), through Chapter 15, highlight key actions that must be taken to achieve a capable and competent water sector, which includes programmes like WSEP.

The NWRS II also indicates the need to build partnership across all strategic actions and the entire water value chain, this point is enunciated by recent government reform within the post-school education and training landscape (2013).

### 2.2.5 Strategic Framework for Water Services (2003)

The Strategic Framework for Water Services [SFWS] (2003) implores the use of existing capacity, skills, and resources in the water services sector in an integrated and optimal way to attract, develop and retain the necessary professional and technical skills, and improve employment and gender equity;

## 3 WATER AND SANITATION EDUCATION PROGRAMME AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aim and objectives of the Programmes are:

- To promote water and sanitation education and create awareness about integrated water resources management, sanitation, and water services through schools.
- To empower educators and learners to enable them to implement water and sanitation innovations.
- Promote careers in the water sector.
- To infuse water and sanitation education into the curriculum.
- To promote behavioural change after the implementation of the action projects.
- To enhance collaboration in the water sector with relevant stakeholders.
- To encourage schools to have sustainable water and sanitation projects.

## 4 HISTORICAL HIGHLIGHTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

WSEP is not a new concept in school education in the water and sanitation sector. The program is an established program that was created in 1996 with long-term goals that must be achieved by 2020. This concept document has outlined the WSEP predecessor which is the 2020 Vision for Water and Sanitation Education Program (2020 VfwSEP). The 2020 VfwSEP, in the course of implementing its goals and maximizing its impact, had several projects introduced. These projects are what comprise the WSEP are listed in section 5.

Table 1 below provides a cumulative view of the achievements from the 2020 VfwSEP inception to the end of 2020. The WSEP seeks to build and move this concept beyond 2020, it aims to sustain and improve on the gains of its predecessor.

It is quite evident that a huge number of schools and learners have benefited directly from this concept, from bursary awards to media classrooms, however, there is always more to do and a lot to improve, hence the need to move, in similar purpose, beyond 2020 with WSEP.

**Table 1WSEP Achievements and Highlights**

Programme Indicator	Achieved Target
Number of Schools Reached	A total of 3500 schools were mobilized and supported through the programme since its inception. The number is for all the programme projects.
Bursaries Awarded	A total of 800 learners have been awarded bursaries to pursue careers in the water and sanitation sector.
Media Classrooms	A total of 55 media classrooms were awarded through a partnership with MTN Foundation from 2005 up until 2016 for the national winners of Baswa Le Meetse project.
United Nation Awards	In 2015 the programme was recognised for its achievement by the United Nations and awarded the "Water for life best practice" Award.
Impact Study	An impact study of the programme was conducted in 2021 which has led to a successful review of the water and sanitation programme.

## 5 WATER AND SANITATION EDUCATION PROGRAMME ADVOCACY PROJECTS COMPOSITION

The Water and Sanitation Education Programme has the following advocacy projects segmented as follows:

### 5.1 CURRICULUM SUPPORT (CS)

Curriculum Support (CS) is the core of the WSEP. It was initiated to integrate water education into the mainstream formal school curricular. It has Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS) aligned resource materials from Grade 1-9. The project mainly entails the empowerment of educators on water and sanitation issues and is conducted through educator workshops. During the workshops, the educators are engaged in the water and sanitation activities that are on the resource materials.

### 5.2 ACTION PROJECTS

The following are the action projects of the Water and Sanitation Education Programme:

#### 5.2.1 Aqua Enduro (AE)

Aqua Enduro (AE) is an initiative aimed at addressing the skills shortage in the scientific and engineering disciplines, targeting Grade 11 learners. It seeks to identify learners who not only have a passion for water and sanitation but also have the determination and discipline it takes to pursue careers in the water sector. AE project stems from the World Water Monitoring Day (WWMD) celebrated yearly in October to highlight the importance of monitoring the drinking water quality. It runs from district to national level with bursaries awarded for the provincial winners.

#### 5.2.2 Public Speaking (PS)

Public Speaking (PS) project started in 2010 with the first bursaries being awarded to the winners in 2011. The project targets learners from Grade 10-11 that are doing maths and science. The project is conducted in a debate format. The learners are grouped in teams of three (3) and are given a theme to research on. The structure of the team is as follows: the 1st speaker delivers an introduction; 2nd speaker covers the main elements and facts of the argument and 3rd speaker delivers a closing argument as a conclusion. It runs from district to national level with bursaries awarded for the provincial winners.

#### 5.2.3 Intervention Project (IP)

Intervention Project shall be aligned to Curriculum Support (CS) project, which is the core project of Water and Sanitation Education Programme. Educators from the schools that have been mobilized for the Intervention Project shall be required to attend an empowerment workshop on the Curriculum Support project and shall have an opportunity to interact with the water and sanitation Learner Support Materials (LSM) that are meant to enhance learning and teaching. Following the mobilization of schools with challenges, Provincial Officials may start an Adopt a School initiative, whereby relevant stakeholders may be involved in order to maximize resource utilization; so that such school is capacitated- that may include empowerment workshops, provision of educational charts, water tips, and so forth. Support to such schools should be continuous until the anticipated outcomes are achieved. Schools need to be encouraged to start up water and sanitation projects. Schools that are performing well may be encouraged to serve as a knowledge hub for their neighbouring schools.

A number of schools are expected to become water and sanitation good ambassadors as a result of the project's implementation.

To ensure the sustainability of the water and sanitation projects, the schools that have been adopted must be continuously monitored and provided with all necessary support throughout the year.

#### 5.2.4 Baswa Le Meetse (BLM)

Baswa Le Meetse (BLM) project targets learners from the Intermediate Phase. Learners initiate a water/ sanitation project within their school and use creativity and innovation to artistically sensitize their communities about what they have been involved in. The project could focus on any of the DWS themes of; water use efficiency, access to water, water quality, sustainable practices, greening, and health and hygiene. There are five art forms that learners could choose from, namely: music, drama, poetry, praise poetry, and poster. Young people have been identified as the primary target audience because they play a crucial role in changing the mindset of the communities. The project runs from district to national level with prize money being awarded for provincial and national winners.

### **5.2.5 Awareness Campaigns**

These are sustained efforts to educate school communities to boost public awareness about water use efficiency, management of toilet facilities, protection of water resources, health and hygiene, and water safety. Water and Sanitation Education Programme awareness campaigns are as follows:

### **5.2.6 Celebration of Special Days (CSD)**

The Celebration of Special Days (CSD) is special days aligned to the department calendar events, i.e. National Water Week, Wetlands Day, Sanitation Week, etc. These special days are celebrated nationally with various messages being disseminated across different platforms to promote integrated water resources management. All provinces are encouraged to annually align their plans with the provincial Communications Unit. All schools are to be encouraged to annually honour these Special Days.

### **5.2.7 Career Promotion (CP)**

The Career Promotion (CP) project is a mechanism that the DWS uses to promote careers in the water sector, intending to sway learners to pursue water and sanitation careers. There are career promotion sessions that are conducted to provide learners with information, relevant documents to support their possible decision to join the water sector. The provinces can directly secure dates with schools or liaise with the Department of Education (DoE) district officials to get their schedule of planned career promotions.

## **6 NATIONAL ADJUDICATION (NA)**

The National Adjudication is one of the main events of the WSEP, its activities are largely centred on the adjudication of each project that has competitive elements. The Minister or Deputy Minister officially opens the event as a keynote speaker.

It is a weeklong packed event that takes place during the September school holidays. During the event, the learners and educators get an opportunity to attend presentations conducted by various stakeholders, educational excursions, and projects adjudication themselves. The action projects that are adjudicated are Aqua Enduro, Public Speaking and Baswa Le Meetse.

## **7 NATIONAL AWARDS CEREMONY**

After the National Adjudication, the Minister or Deputy Minister hosts the Awards Ceremony, with bursaries, money, certificates, and trophies being awarded as prizes for the winning schools and learners. The bursars are encouraged to study towards the water and sanitation-related careers, whilst the prize money is used by schools to procure water and sanitation-related needs for the sustainability of their projects.

## **8 MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

During Provincial Adjudications National coordinators monitor if the adjudications are consistent with the approved national guideline documents. After the adjudications Programme Coordinating team conducts monitoring and evaluation in all provinces to encourage schools to have sustainable water and sanitation projects. Another purpose of the monitoring and evaluation process is to monitor the use of the prize monies won by schools. The standard procedure of usage of prizes is outlined in each action project guideline document. This exercise also assists in marketing the Programme, addressing shortfalls, and most importantly helps in monitoring and evaluating the extent of the Programme implementation by the schools.

The Programme's implementation through its projects contributes to the development of community transformation in terms of water resources management behaviours, attitudes, and mindsets.

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