



## INTERNET ARTICLE

### **DWS and SALGA join forces to boost water governance in Ehlanzeni, Mpumalanga**

30 May 2025

In a major move to strengthen local water governance, the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS), in partnership with the South African Local Government Association (SALGA), recently hosted a transformative three-day Water Services Policy Advocacy and Alignment Workshop in Mbombela. Held from 26 to 28 May 2025, the event brought together municipal officials from across the Ehlanzeni District to enhance policy alignment and legal compliance in the water and sanitation sector.

Municipalities from Bushbuckridge, City of Mbombela, Nkomazi, and Thaba Chweu took part in the workshop, which aimed to empower local governments to develop, align, and review their water and sanitation policies and by-laws in line with national standards.

This initiative forms part of the broader Policy Advocacy and Alignment Project, a national response to the growing gap between well-crafted national water policies and their on-the-ground implementation at municipal level. Through this project, DWS is helping Water Services Authorities (WSAs) navigate the complex journey of policy development, legal drafting, and the approval process.

During the workshop, Mr Siboniso Ndlovu from DWS's Policy, Strategy, and Evaluation unit delivered a powerful keynote, underlining the urgency of municipal alignment with national frameworks.

"A major milestone has been reached in the development of the WSA Water and Sanitation Services Policy Model by DWS. This is a practical tool designed to support municipalities in crafting their comprehensive policies," he explained.

Mr Humbulani Nevondo, from the DWS Head Office, focused on the legal backbone of effective policy.

"By-laws give life to policies. They provide the legal backing for implementation and explain why services are delivered in a particular way," he said.

Taking participants from theory to practice, Mr Bayanda Sithole introduced the draft Water and Sanitation Policy Framework and facilitated a hands-on session where each municipality began crafting tailored policies and by-laws. This practical element sparked collaboration and peer learning across municipal boundaries.

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## water & sanitation

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Reflecting on the process, Mr Mpho Makhavhu of Bushbuckridge Local Municipality shared:

“It has to take DWS and SALGA to bring us together from the same offices to do this important exercise. The issue of uniformity amongst municipalities is important, and this session will go a long way in helping us achieve a consistent approach.”

Ms Decia Maluma from SALGA Mpumalanga applauded the energy and participation shown by all delegates and emphasized the need for continued internal collaboration.

“Let this be the start of continuous dialogue. Engage your finance, legal, and teams to ensure your policies are complete and inclusive,” she urged.

Closing the workshop, Ms Sabo Makgaloa from DWS Mpumalanga Operations thanked attendees for their dedication and highlighted the bigger picture.

“This is how we build capacity and ensure that municipalities are equipped to meet their service delivery mandates,” she concluded.

This workshop marks a significant stride towards improved water service delivery, ensuring that municipalities are not only compliant but also capable, aligned, and community-focused in their water governance efforts.

**Themba Khoza**

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