



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

DRAFT CONCEPT DOCUMENT FOR SOUTH AFRICA WATER AND SANITATION YOUTH NETWORK

SOUTH AFRICA WATER AND SANITATION YOUTH NETWORK

1. BACKGROUND

The primary intention of the Department of Water and Sanitation (hereafter referred to as DWS) is to seek and encourage engagements, technical expertise, and knowledge-sharing among the youth in the water and sanitation sector to improve institutional governance, performance, job creation and ultimately the service delivery to their communities.

The Youth Development sub-directorate does this in line with the National Youth Policy (NYP) 2020-2030. This updates the previous policy by speaking to new and existing challenges facing young people. The introduced policy is guided by the Constitution of South Africa, the UN World Program of action for youth 2000 and beyond, The African Youth Charter 2006, and the National Development Plan of the Republic. The policy has identified certain obstacles as the priority to address.

The final agreement was that the NYP will consolidate youth initiatives that intentionally enhance the abilities of young people to transform the economy and society they live in. This will be achieved by addressing their needs, promoting positive outcomes, opportunities, choices, relationships, and necessary support for holistic development of all young people, and particularly those outside the social, political and economic mainstream.

PROPOSED OVERVIEW OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN WATER AND SANITATION YOUTH NETWORK

South African Water and Sanitation Youth Network (SAWSYN) was proposed and initiated after a group of young professionals made up of Graduate Trainees and Candidates from Department and Water Boards who attended the DWS Youth Indaba which was held in June 2022 at Birchwood Hotel. This idea was built off a pre-existing proposal that had been made before but was never taken up successfully. The SAWSYN was proposed to address the needs of young people and empower them through to respond to the DWS National Youth Development strategy and its associated pillars which are Job Creation, Education and Training, Entrepreneurship, Economic Transformation, Innovation and Social Cohesion and Nation Building. This will be implemented within the water sector and all other related

sectors and also inclusive of the students enrolled in universities that are being sponsored by the Department, and those not sponsored, and those at TVET colleges. This is by its nature the Network will have three main focuses, one focusing on students, developed and underdeveloped young people within and outside the sector, youth that are not in employment, not in education and not in training, the other on youth working for the sector.

The formulation of South African Water and Sanitation Youth Network is in a process of organizing themselves and creating a forum that will consolidate the needs and initiatives of young people externally and within the sector.

2. THE CORE EXISTENCE OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN WATER AND SANITATION YOUTH NETWORK

2.1 Aim: The aim of the Network is to facilitate growth and development of students sponsored by the Department, Young people who are NEET and young people in the sector.

2.2 Vision: To become a centre of information sharing for students sponsored by the Department and other water sector entities, mentors within the sector and young professionals in Water Boards and within the sector to provide support for a better understanding of the sector be it local, national and International. .

2.3 Objectives:

- Give effect to the National Youth Development Strategy
- Establishment of relationships within the sector and external stakeholders.
- Establishment of ad-hoc mentorship among the young professionals in the sector.
- Establishment of links with different sector components to facilitate the sharing of technical information.
- Professional educational engagements, through workshops and seminars to offer guidance on professional progress; and
- Acting as a conduit to youth difficulties, giving direction on which policies and structures to consult in specific circumstances.

3. THE MAIN ACTIVITIES OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN WATER AND SANITATION YOUTH NETWORK IN THE SECTOR WILL INCLUDE INTER-ALIA:

- To create a reservoir of skilled, knowledgeable, patriotic, and committed youth.
- To organise, coordinate and facilitate workshops, training, and seminars for development of youth.
- To negotiate, facilitate and create platforms for young people to express their views on socioeconomic activities of the youth.
- To celebrate, recognise individuals and organisations which contribute to the development of youth within the sector.

- To create a platform for knowledge sharing amongst the youth in the sector.
- Encourage the pursuit of excellence and professionalism amongst young people.
- Promote positive contribution to the country, continent and the world through thought provoking research, innovation, and development within the sector.
- To ensure full optimisation and benefits for SAWSYN from professional affiliations, memoranda of understanding (MOU) and other agreements entered into by cross sector partners in and outside the country.
- Advocacy of absorption, participation in decision making processes and promotion strategies that are aligned with the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA);
- To contribute and assist water boards and municipalities in responding to water quality and quantity crisis.
- To organise and coordinate benchmarking platforms for the youth within the sector.
- Providing support to students for a better understanding of the sector during their university years within the network.
- To work closely with Career management, Youth development, other DWS structures as well as other water sector structures to help students participate in and awareness campaigns run by the Department.
- Creating Youth Network societies in communities and universities with recipients of DWS bursaries; and
- TVET to be include – to deal with NEET
- Introducing young people in and outside the sector, encouraging them to join water sector bodies such as the Water Institute of Southern Africa (WISA), South African Water and Sanitation Network (SAWSYN) and many others, locally and internationally.

4. COMPOSITION AND ROLES OF THE YOUNG WATER PROFESSIONAL

The Network structure will consist of representatives of youth as follows:

- The group of young professionals made up of Graduate trainees and candidates that work for DWS, provincial offices, universities, clusters, water boards and
- Students enrolled in universities that the Department and its entities are sponsoring and supporting.
- Representatives from TVETs colleges

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COMMITTEE- GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

The governance structure of SAWSYN will ensure effective leadership and management. The key roles and responsibilities include

- 4.1 Chairperson:** Management of stakeholder engagements, representation of the Young Water Professional Network externally, and leading of internal meetings

- 4.2 **Ex –Officio member:** Oversight and support to the committee to ensure continuity of network activities and objectives. This can be the outgoing committee chair person or deputy chair person.
- 4.3 **Deputy Chairperson:** Oversight and operations in the SAWSYN- this will generally involve leadership and accountability for the performance of the network with sector stakeholders and other parties, acting as president in the president's absence/unavailability
- 4.4 **Chief Administrator:** Writing meeting minutes, drafting SAWSYN documentation, and organizing meetings.
- 4.5 **Chief Operations Auditor:** Ensuring that the SAWSYN operates according to its governing documentation and that resources are used effectively and efficiently.
- 4.6 **Structure and Policy Agent:** Ensuring that all members' views and opinions are heard and incorporated to shape the water sector and the functioning of the youth network within the boundaries of legislature and regulation.
- 4.7 **Professional Engagement Officer:** Planning and co-ordinating of workshops and seminars
- 4.8 **Student Affairs Officer:** The provision of support to students sponsored by Department and its entities for success at higher education institutions to enhance student growth and development.
- 4.9 **Database Management Officer:** The recording and management of data, ensuring that it is updated regularly and is accessible.

5. REPORTING

The South African Water and Sanitation Youth Network (SAWSYN) will implement a structured reporting mechanism to ensure transparency, accountability, and effective communication. This will involve:

- 5.1 **Quarterly Reports:** Each quarter, the SAWSYN committee will compile a comprehensive report detailing progress on initiatives, challenges faced, and milestones achieved. This report will be disseminated to all stakeholders including the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS), participating water boards, universities, and TVET colleges.
- 5.2 **Annual Report:** An annual report summarizing the year's activities, financial expenditures, and impact assessments will be published. This report will also highlight success stories and areas for improvement, providing a clear picture of the Network's contributions to youth development in the water and sanitation sector.
- 5.3 **Meeting Minutes:** Minutes from all SAWSYN meetings will be documented and shared with relevant stakeholders. This ensures that all decisions and discussions are recorded and accessible for future reference.
- 5.4 **Stakeholder Feedback:** Regular feedback will be sought from stakeholders through surveys and feedback forms. This will help in refining the Network's approach and

addressing any concerns promptly. The mechanisms used for feedback will be both physical and virtual platforms to allow for increased dissemination of information.

6. MONITORING AND EVALUATION (M&E)

The M&E framework for SAWSYN will focus on tracking progress towards achieving the Network's objectives and ensuring that activities are aligned with the National Youth Development Strategy. Key components include:

- 6.1 **Performance Indicators:** Specific, measurable indicators will be established to track progress in areas such as job creation, education and training, entrepreneurship, economic transformation, innovation, and social cohesion. These indicators will be described in detail on the SAWSYN year plan.
- 6.2 **Regular Assessments:** Periodic evaluations will be conducted to assess the effectiveness of programs and initiatives. This includes mid-term and end-of-year evaluations.
- 6.3 **Data Collection:** Data on participant demographics, program participation, and outcomes will be systematically collected and analysed. This will help in understanding the impact of SAWSYN's activities and identifying areas for improvement.
- 6.4 **Reporting Tools:** Tools such as dashboards and progress trackers will be developed to facilitate real-time monitoring and reporting to ensure accountability and impact.

7. MEETINGS AS PER GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

The governance structure of SAWSYN will effect regular meetings to ensure smooth operations and effective decision-making. The proposed schedule includes:

- 7.1 **Monthly Committee Meetings:** These meetings will involve the core SAWSYN committee members, including the Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson, Chief Administrator, Chief Operations Auditor, and other key officers. These meetings shall be held in person (physical), remotely (virtual platforms) or hybrid (both physical and remote access).
- 7.2 **Quarterly Stakeholder Meetings:** Broader stakeholder meetings will be held quarterly to update all partners on progress and solicit feedback. This includes representatives from DWS, water boards, universities, TVET colleges, and other stakeholders.
- 7.3 **Annual General Meeting (AGM):** An AGM will be held once a year to review the past year's activities, approve financial statements, and plan for the upcoming year. This meeting will involve all stakeholders and members of the Network. The AGM shall be held in persons (physical) and remotely (allow for hybrid access). The AGM will provide a platform to vote on SAWSYN matters, implement changes to the constitution and terms of reference.
- 7.4 **Adhoc/special meetings:** These meetings will be held as and when necessary for activity planning and special task teams.

7.5 **Quorum:** 50% plus 1 of the network members will constitute a quorum and allow for the meeting to sit and all decisions taken to be true.

7.6 **Cancellation:** Meetings shall be cancelled if the quorum is not met and/or if quorum is not met on the leadership committee. Where the chairperson is not able to participate in critical network meetings such as the monthly committee meetings and the Annual general Meeting, he or she shall submit an apology in writing to the chief administrator and appoint an acting chairperson for the meeting.

8. SUPPORT REQUIRED

The SAWSYN will require support from all the Branches within the Department of Water and Sanitation, the respective organisations where the SAWSYN are working, as well as from external stakeholders including water boards, SETAs, NYDA, donor agencies etc .

9. RESOURCES

9.1 Finances

- Travelling budget for university students to attend SAWSYN meetings.
- Funding promotional merchandise
- Representation among stakeholders in Youth development-related discussions/gatherings

9.2 Human Resources/Time

This is not the appointment of new personnel to run the SAWSYN, but the members to be able to account for the time spent doing network activities. The following are required, therefore.

- Authorisation for traveling to represent SAWSYN outside the office.
- Being included in demand plans of the different branches and the respective organisation like Waterboards, CMAs and other identified organisations who are part of the Network
- Inclusion of the network in PAs

10. OPERATIONAL FRAMEWORK

The South African Water and Sanitation Youth Network should have a web-based centre from which communication with young professionals is archived, both ways, managed by the SAWSYN committee. However, human interaction must remain key to the functions of the Network.

11. MEASURABLE OUTCOMES

The South African Water and Sanitation Youth Network seeks to achieve the following outcomes:

- Implementation of the 5 pillars of the National Youth Development Strategy
- Formation of the SAWSYN Forum
- The SAWSYN Forum Constitution draft
- Road Map toward the implementation of the above-mentioned activities
- The SAWSYN Forum Task Team

12. STAKEHOLDER LIST

- All Branches within DWS
- Existing Young Professionals structures within the sector
- Water Utilities
- Other Government Departments
- Relevant university representatives
- Relevant TVETs representatives
- Self-employed entrepreneur
- Mining industry
- Manufacturing companies
- Agriculture Farmers (Water use Authorisation emerging farmers support (HDI's) engagement.
- State Owned Companies
- SETAs