



SOUTH AFRICA

Water and Sanitation Profile

POPULATION AND HEALTH STATISTICS	
Population (2008)	48.7 million ^a
Proportion of population living in urban areas (2008)	61% ^a
Average annual urban/rural population growth rates (1990-2008)	2.7/0.7% ^a
Under age 5 mortality rate (2007)	59/1000 live births ^b
Under age 5 mortality rate due to diarrheal disease (2004)	7.9% ^b
<small>Note: Most recently available data provided. ^a World Bank. 2009 World Development Indicators (WDI) Database. ^b World Health Organization (WHO). World Health Statistics 2009.</small>	

WSS SECTOR OVERVIEW

South Africa is one of the few African countries making significant progress with the delivery of clean water. Post-apartheid, the Government of South Africa has treated access to clean water as a basic human right with robust programs ensuring service for the poor. In fact, South Africa is the most active builder of reservoir and trans-basin conveyance projects on the continent. However, water demand and scarcity are growing. By 2020, the country will likely face serious risks of water shortages, adversely affecting prosperity and livelihoods.¹

The Government implemented the Free Basic Water Implementation Strategy in 2002. As a result, up to 50 gallons per household connection per day, or up to 25 liters per capita per day for communal water points, are provided free of charge. Today, over 86 percent of households are served by the free “life-line” water supply.²

¹ African Development Bank. *African Economic Outlook* (2007).

² South Africa DWAF. *Free Basic Water Project*. http://www.dwaf.gov.za/dir_ws/fbw/

South Africa has met its Millennium Development Goal (MDG) target for drinking water access; however, its progress toward meeting the sanitation target, specifically in rural areas, has been slow. This is partly due to a traditionally stronger emphasis and prioritization of water supply over sanitation in rural communities. It can also be attributed to the absence of an effective system for promoting improved sanitation at the community level. Although the system used for drinking water supply is community-based, sanitation is household-focused.

In 2003, South Africa established the Strategic Framework for Water Services, which set new drinking water and sanitation targets, including universal access to water and sanitation, and priority accorded to communities with the greatest needs. Recognizing the challenges that continue to face the country, the Water for Growth and Development Framework was released in March 2009. Included among its high-level recommendations were strengthening institutional capacity, mainstreaming water considerations into all growth and development planning decisions, diversifying water supply sources to include more groundwater, reclaimed water, and desalinated water, and water conservation.

WATER AVAILABILITY IN SOUTH AFRICA	
Renewable internal freshwater resources per capita, m ³ /person/year (2008)	902 ^c
Water withdrawals, m ³ /person/year (2002)	271 ^c
Projected water resources per capita, m ³ /person/year in 2015	795 ^d
<small>Note: Most recently available data provided. ^c UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). <i>FAO Aquastat Database</i>. “Freshwater resources” refers to estimates of runoff into rivers and recharge of ground water and does not include flows from other countries. ^d Note this value was calculated using a straight-line calculation based on average population growth rates (1990-2008) with no adjustment for consumption or technology changes. Data was obtained from <i>World Bank WDI Database</i> (population) and <i>FAO Aquastat Database</i> (water resources).</small>	

KEY GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

Agency	Description	Contact Information
DWEA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsible for national policies, strategies, technical support, and regulation; Oversees WSS service via four of 15 water boards remaining under its purview to rural areas and small municipalities. 	Ms. Buyelwa Sonjica, Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs Tel: 012-336-8733
Water Service Authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides service to consumers either directly or through agreements with water service providers. 	Varies
Water boards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water service providers typically providing regional or bulk service; Four water boards provide WSS service where municipalities have not taken over service or are not available to provide service. 	Varies
DWEA Masimbambane Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focuses on water and sanitation development activities in rural areas. 	Ms. Portia Makhanya, Program Manager Tel: 27-12-336-7585 makhanyap@dwaf.gov.za

WSS SECTOR FRAMEWORK

Prior to 1994, responsibility for the water supply and sanitation (WSS) sector was fragmented among a large number of institutions. In 1994, the Government established the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry (DWAF), now the Department of Water and Environmental Affairs (DWEA). DWEA is responsible for ensuring that all South Africans have equitable access to water supply and sanitation. DWEA consulted a range of interested parties and produced a policy on community WSS in November 1994.³ Over subsequent years, several more policies have been developed to give legal basis to a constitutional right of access to water. DWEA oversees the activities of all water sector institutions, is responsible for water resources, and is the lead policy-maker and regulator. DWEA's specific responsibilities include: issuing licenses for water use and discharge; setting compulsory national WSS standards for rates;

³ DWAF. *Water Supply and Sanitation Policy White Paper: Water – An Indivisible National Asset* (1994).

contracting between water service authorities and water service providers; and issuing model by-laws.

Water services authorities (at the metropolitan, district or local levels) are responsible for providing water services within their areas. They can either provide service directly or contract with water service providers through service delivery agreements.

Water boards are regional or bulk water service providers that sell water to, or accept wastewater from, other water services providers. Water boards may also provide retail water services directly to customers on behalf of water services authorities. There are 15 water boards in South Africa which collectively serve about half the population. In the rural areas, service provision is shared among municipalities, water boards, and community-based organizations.

THE URBAN SUB-SECTOR

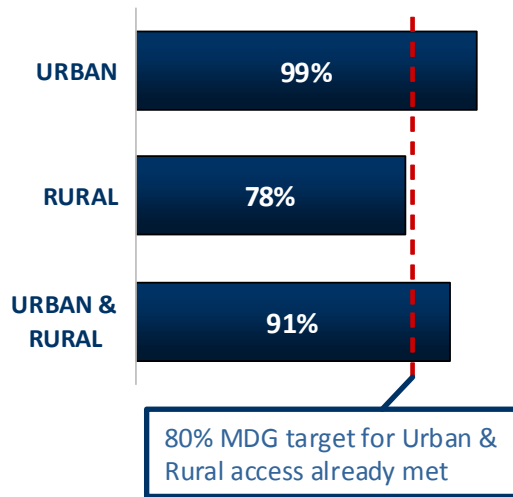
WSS services in urban areas are highly developed in South Africa. Many of the largest cities are successfully run municipalities, with the ability to meet revenue requirements for not only operation and maintenance, but replacement and expansion as well. Several municipal systems are becoming increasingly sophisticated with innovative financing schemes and treatment capacity. Use of alternative water supplies is also gaining increased attention; DWAF has speculated that desalination capacity will need to increase from its current level of 1 percent of South Africa's water supply to as much as 7 to 10 percent by 2030.⁴ The existence and rapid growth of informal urban settlements presents a challenge, leading to many living without sufficient water services or infrastructure.⁵

In general, the urban sector is facing the challenge of operating and maintaining aging systems. Many systems were established 50 or even 100 years ago. Therefore, many components of these systems have exceeded their design life and are falling into disrepair, requiring replacement or upgrade. Another challenge South Africa faces is the rising cost to operate and maintain urban systems that serve a

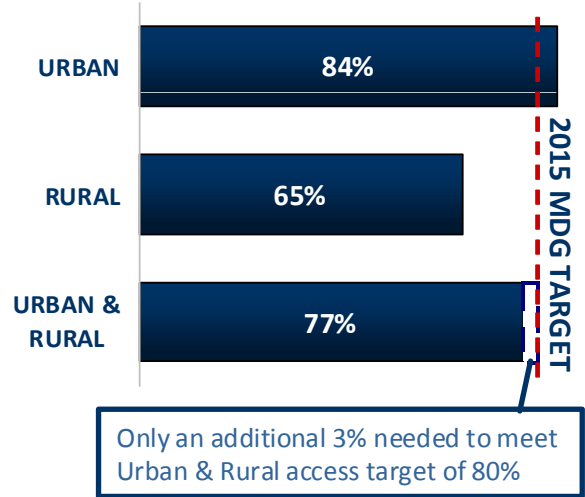
⁴ Global Water Intelligence. *South Africa Looks to Desalination* (2009).

⁵ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)/World Water Assessment Program. *Second UN Water Development Report: Water, a Shared Responsibility* (2006).

Meeting MDG 7: Access to Water in 2008



Meeting MDG 7: Access to Sanitation in 2008



Data Source: WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply and Sanitation (JMP), *Progress on Sanitation and Drinking Water, 2010 Update*. Note on comparing baseline data from earlier reports: The JMP methodology uses all available data in each successive report. This means that estimates may be recalculated for earlier years if more data becomes available. The JMP notes that these new estimates may affect the baseline reported in earlier data sets.

significant number of qualifying low-income persons with free access to domestic supplies. If government subsidies decline or are terminated, many WSS service providers will experience serious revenue decline and customer backlash as they raise rates.

THE RURAL SUB-SECTOR

In rural areas, the DWEA's Masibambane Program was initiated in 2001 and currently focuses on poor rural communities across all of South Africa's nine provinces. It was developed as a sector-wide approach linked to budget-based donor support and is currently in its third and final phase.⁶ The initial investment was US\$ 330 million (2.2 billion rand) with a focus on the three poorest provinces. By early 2007, a backlog of approximately 3.4 million people remained without adequate sanitation service in rural areas, and it is likely that the national target for universal sanitation will not be met.⁷

Challenges include the difficulty and cost of extending services to a highly dispersed rural population. Also, rural service providers remain relatively weak in terms of financial, managerial, and technical capacity. It is likely that the South African government will have to

continue subsidizing poor rural areas for the near future.

DONOR INVOLVEMENT

The European Union is the largest single donor to the sector. Another important donor is the Mvula Trust, a non-governmental organization that focuses on the delivery of water services through community-based approaches. It was established with substantial support from the European Union, and over the past 15 years has disbursed more than 300 million rand to water services programs and projects throughout the country. Other donors include the Netherlands, Irish Aid, and the Swiss Agency for Cooperation and Development.

⁶ DWAF. *Masibambane website*: www.dwaf.gov.za/Masibambane/default.asp (2009).

⁷ DWAF. *Summative Evaluation of the Masibambane II Programme* (2007).

DONOR	ACTIVITIES	CONTACT INFORMATION ^e
European Union	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provision of basic water supply and sanitation services to rural communities in Northern Province, Eastern Cape, and KwaZulu-Natal. 	Charles Reeve Tel: 012-452-5248 Charles.reeve@ec.europa.eu
Water and Sanitation Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support in developing a WSS MDG roadmap: collecting and monitoring data, tracking progress, supporting key reform processes; ▪ Help with the development of WSS sector finance and information and monitoring systems; ▪ Microfinance for small water projects in rural and peri-urban areas; support for urban water service providers to develop market-based finance mechanisms. 	Toni Sittoni wspaf@worldbank.org
Mvula Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ South Africa-based organization focusing on water and sanitation development. 	Andile Mahlalutye Tel: 27-11-403-3425
^e Contact information may change frequently and therefore be different from what is noted above.		

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Additional references that aided in the completion of this report include: WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply and Sanitation (JMP), *Progress on Sanitation and Drinking Water, 2010 Update* (2010); the Water and Sanitation Program Field Note 8, "The National Water and Sanitation Programme in South Africa: Turning the 'Right to Water' into Reality" (2002); the AfDB/Organization for Economic Development, *Annual Economic Outlook Report, South Africa* (2007); and the DWEA Webpage <http://www.dwaf.gov.za/>.

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