

Third Party Evaluator's Opinion on Kwandebele Region Water Augmentation Project

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Criteria-1 / Relevance

In South Africa (SA) there are 3 spheres of government (National – Policy formation, Provincial – Implement Policy & Local government – service provider). The National government initiated the National Water Act (NWA) which was amended in 2004, later in the year the Water Service Act (WSA) was initiated to complement the National Water Act. The WSA aims at providing a development framework for water service providers, clearly defines the different roles and responsibilities of different players. The Act legislates the district municipal function of providing water supply and sanitation services, the authority to deliver water and sanitation services are delegated to municipalities. It provides a guide to municipalities on how to look after the interests of their consumers. Since the municipality has taken over the role of water service provider it has enabled the accessibility of water service in a large scale.

Water is a fundamental human need of present and future generation, the service enables people from different communities to live with dignity. Water and sanitation service has impacted positively on development e.g. (participation of disadvantaged women and men in economic and social development).

Community members are no longer affected by diseases through drinking contaminated water. Community members especially women and girl children used to travel long distances to get water and they were exposed to sexual abuse and other violence. Since the inception of the regulating reservoir people have access to clean water without a hassle.

Due to traditional gender roles, lack of water is a more pressing priority for women than men. Men from the community will not mention water as number one priority but that has changed with a change of mind set from involving women in decision making around where and how water should be provided as a service. Communities have access to clean, accessible and reliable water supply and have the time to participate effectively on social and economic aspects.

Criteria-2/ efficiency

Historically in SA women were among the disadvantaged people living in the community with lots of expected social roles. Men migrate to greener pastures as a way of maintaining their households even when they don't have necessary skills. Having access to water will make the community united. Household members participate in agricultural activities and when communities have access to clean water it makes it easier for households to secure food for consumption and selling.

It would be of interest when implementing a similar project to consider the following;- one: to understand the input and participation of communities on water and sanitation. Two: the impact of water on health and livelihoods issues.

Community participation will encourage accountability and informed decision making. An essential service like water for it to be sustainable one needs to have community buy-in and control. Health is not only an isolated issue on its own; it has implications on social, institutional, economical and political elements. Water as a service is a cross-cutting issue that cannot be looked at in isolation. Water and sanitation service challenges service providers to properly plan and process information in developing good and sustainable processes.