

MSB III Mid-Term Review

Sector Collaboration **8**

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contents

Introduction	2
Relevance	3
Key Recommendations	4
<i>KPI 11.1 Sustainable collaborative structures are in place and are supported by regular, inclusive strategic planning processes.</i>	6
<i>KPI 11.2 Provincial Water Sector Plans developed and reviewed annually</i>	7
<i>KPI 11.3 National Water Sector Plan developed and reviewed annually.</i>	8
<i>KPI 11.4 Cooperation of Integrated Water Resources Management in Africa, in support of NEPAD.</i>	8
Key Recommendations	9
Efficiency	9
References	11

tables

Table 1: Probable benefits from participation in provincial forum	5
Table 2: Rating of 3 provincial forums on pre-selected performance areas	5

Introduction

To collaborate is “to work to work jointly with others or together” (Merian-Webster Online Dictionary). The concept is also defined as a recursive process where two or more parties work together in pursuit of a common goal/s. Parties involved should be joined by the desire to capitalize on the synergistic power of collaboration effort (Daley, 2008). Collaboration does not require leadership and can sometimes bring better results through decentralization and egalitarianism.

Collaboration is not an end itself, but a means to an end. In the context of the water sector, collaboration is in support (but not limited to) of leadership, policy (formulation, monitoring and review), planning and budgeting, lesson learning, regulation and implementation of programmes. If this paradigm is acceptable in future DWAF would evaluate collaboration in terms of the extent to which it supports these key focal areas, not as an independent virtue.

In the context of MSB 3, sector collaboration talks to KPI 11 .

- KPI 11.1 Sustainable collaborative structures are in place and are supported by regular, inclusive strategic planning processes.
- *Measurement:* Reporting of Provincial Sector Forums, National Sector meeting (WSLG), Catchment Coordinating Committees.
- KPI 11.2 Provincial Water Sector Plans developed and reviewed annually
- *Measurement:* Documents produced and approved by relevant collaborative structures.
- KPI 11.3 National Water Sector Plan developed and reviewed annually.
- *Measurement:* Document produced and approved by relevant collaborative structure.
- KPI 11.4 Cooperation of Integrated Water Resources Management in Africa, in support of NEPAD.
- *Measurement:* DWAF reporting on water sector initiatives in Africa.

For evaluation purposes, the original measures which were set for sector collaboration were limiting and very narrow as measures of collaboration. Structures can be in place, but if they are not effective in fulfilling their mandate, that would be considered insufficient. Terms such as “regular meetings” and “inclusive meetings” are relative and subject to different interpretations. This observation is confirmed by DWAF’s conclusion in its own internal evaluation in 2008 of sector collaboration, which concluded that sector collaboration is a moving target. This conclusion was not only erroneous, but based on the measures that were set in the first place. Sector collaboration is in reality a moving target if targets are not clarified upfront, and once that is done, it will stop to be a moving target.

Relevance

The DWAF mandate of managing the country's water resources affects and is in turn affected by other functions located in other organs of state (Agriculture, Land, Environment, Health, Local Government, etc.) and the such execution of DWAF's mandate hinges on effective collaboration with local, provincial and various national organs of state (DWAF, Undated).

The Strategic Framework for Water Services outlines the Constitutional principle of cooperative governance to which all spheres of government should adhere. The strategic aims of the Intergovernmental Relations Framework Act (IGRFA) are to promote and facilitate cooperative decision making, coordinate and align priorities, budgets, policies and activities across interrelated functions and sectors, ensure a smooth flow of information within government, and between government and communities, with a view to enhancing the implementation of policy and programmes, prevent and resolve conflict. The Intergovernmental Relations Framework Act was promulgated in 2005 to bring to effect the principle of cooperative governance, by providing for structured way of managing organs of state.

The IGRFA provides for establishment of intergovernmental relations structures at municipal, at a provincial level and national levels. At a national level the President's Coordinating Committee of central to national coordination with possibilities of setting up function specific forums and technical committees. A similar arrangement is place in provinces, with the Premier's Intergovernment forum being central for provincial coordination. The water sector forums in provinces are water specific forums feeding into the Provincial Growth and Development Plans (PGDPs). At a municipal level similar structures are in place that link politicians and official.

The need for intergovernmental relations at an international level is motivated by shared watercourses and aquifers with high spatial temporal variability. The strategic objectives of the Regional Sector Action Plans (RSAPs) include;

- Maintaining and sustaining an enabling environment for regional water resources development and management.
- Providing a framework for sustainable, effective and efficient planning and management of shared river basins at regional and related national levels.
- Establishing supporting mechanisms for strategic infrastructure development for regional integration and development, and poverty alleviation.
- Developing, promoting and facilitating best practices regarding effective participation by various individual and institutional stakeholders in water resource development and management, including women, youth and other disadvantaged groups.

The Water Services Framework Strategy commits DWAF to seek to learn and share knowledge and experiences related to the development of water services policies and strategies in Africa and also commits to the principle of sharing water with neighboring

states. In an attempt to translate the policy prescript to reality, the Minister at the Launch of MSB 3 promised “to extend the Water Information Network (WIN-SA) to SADC, NePAD and other partners in Delivering MDGs in Africa.”¹

Key Recommendations

The Sector could then consciously adjust targets based on priorities that have been identified in a given period.

Effectiveness

DWAF as a sector leader adopted (by default) a decentralization approach, leading by consensus. This is largely a reflection of the history where DWAF was predominantly developing and popularizing policy and providing support. The shortcoming of this approach is that collaboration is largely viewed as an end itself. This approach has been successful in development of a coherent water sector, which evolved during MSB 1 and MSB 2. During MSB 3 there has been an increasing consciousness within DWAF of the need to fulfill its regulatory constitutional requirements.

In terms of rating of DWAF’s leadership role from the regional forums, 10% rated excellent, 69% rated as good, 17% fair, 3% poor and 1% terrible. The 4% that rated DWAF’s role very low do coincide with the new participants in forums. Participants in the WSA survey rated slightly differently, 19.8% excellent, 52.9% good, 17.4% fair and 9.9% poor. In both surveys (WSA and forum) the rating of DWAF’s leadership role was rated good to excellent by between 72.7% and 79% of the survey participants. The scores are based on the respondent’s own understanding of what DWAF leadership role should be.

A significant proportion (78%) of the respondents in the three regions surveyed had been participating in the forums for more than two years, while 18% had participated in the forums between 1 and 2 years. Only 4% of the respondents had been involved in the forums for less than 1 year. If these percentages are anything to go by, one can read that there is not much turnover in participation in the 3 regional forums.

The survey participants were asked to rate good, fair or poor on a range of predetermined probable benefits which they were expected to benefit from the provincial forums. This spread of scores reflects that, to the extent that individuals and institutions participate in the provincial forums, there are a range of benefits which accrue to both the individual and the institution concerned. The results show that those sector partners that participate in regional forums do get a range of benefits.

¹ Speech by Mrs LB Hendricks, Minister of Water Affairs and Forestry, Launch of Masibambane III, Gallagher Estate, Midrand, Gauteng, 17 March 2008

Table 1²: Probable benefits from participation in provincial forum

Potential benefits	Good %	Fair	Poor
Sharing of best practices	60	34	6
Sharing experiences	45	48	7
Providing programme input	49	42	9
Coordinating programmes	57	36	7
Input to national strategy	39	44	17
Input to provincial strategy	47	39	14
Getting accurate feedback	42	45	13
Prioritising Masibambane	54	33	13
Information on WRPs	54	33	13
Integrating planning	40	51	9
Promoting WfGD	50	39	11
Facilitating dialogue	40	47	13
Integrating stakeholders	53	38	9
Learning from each other	50	36	14
Providing support for each other	45	46	9
Integration of services and resources	39	45	16
Synergy with land reform	39	40	21
Promoting sustainable management	52	38	10
Average score	47.5	40.8	11.7

The provincial forums are also the locus of DWAF support for local municipalities. Table # below shows the percentage of participants scoring of performance of their provincial forums in terms of the support it provides to municipalities in different predetermined performance areas.

Table 2: Rating of 3 provincial forums on pre-selected performance areas

Performance area	Good	Fair	Poor	Not relevant
Water demand management	53	38	9	0
Water quality management	47	44	9	0
Water conservation	30	42	21	7
Consumer charters	31	33	26	10
Tariff policy and billing	35	43	14	8
Water services business plans	44	45	9	2
Appropriate technology	45	41	13	1
Asset management	32	43	18	7
Backlog eradication	48	38	11	3
Gender awareness	46	33	17	4
HIV & Aids awareness	46	24	23	7
CSO Awareness	60	26	9	5
Water resource management	47	28	18	7
Public awareness programmes	46	34	12	8
Average score	43.6%	36.6%	14.9%	4.9%

² Note that this is not an exhaustive list, but represents those issues which were uppermost in the minds of the evaluation team.

The WSAs survey reveals that 94.9% agreed that the support provided by MSB was relevant to the needs of their municipalities, and of those 96.2% see the support as having had a direct bearing on improved services. Asked the same question of effectiveness differently, 57.9% of the respondents think that they got effective as a direct result of MSB support. Of those surveyed, 92.4% of the respondents think that their municipalities received new information and skills that they use in their day to day work.

KPI 11.1 Sustainable collaborative structures are in place and are supported by regular, inclusive strategic planning processes.

Measurement: Reporting of Provincial Sector Forums, National Sector meeting (WSLG), Catchment Coordinating Committees.

In response to the prescripts of the IGR Act, DWAF has developed a manual entitled, Guidelines on practical application of the Intergovernmental Relations Framework Act. 13 of 2005. In addition, a related manual entitled Selected best Cases of Best Practice: Promoting Intergovernmental Relations in the Water Sector for DWAF, has also been produced. The process of rolling out the implementation of the guidelines is underway is underway at both national and provincial levels.

The process of reconfiguration of collaborative structures at national, provincial levels is underway. This measurement for KPI is silent on municipal level collaboration, placing emphasis only regional and national collaboration are considered. The process of setting up of CMAs is going very slowly with very few set up.

Seven (7) out of the nine (9) water sector forums have been reconfigured in line with IGR Act. Mpumalanga region does not have a forum and Limpopo's forum has been limping due to change of political leadership. Participation by sector partners in the regional forums varies from region to region, and is an issue that requires more attention in almost all regions.

Since 2007 DWAF has embarked on a process of reconfiguration of sector collaboration structures with a focus on both national and regional structures. As part of this process the WSLG and MCC at a national level have also been through significant realignment in line with the IGR. The WSLG has been reconfigured to include other DGs from other sector Departments. The first meeting of the reconfigured WSLG has had nearly 100% attendance. While attendance is not the only measure of effectiveness, it is a necessary condition. Seven of the nine technical committees of the reconfigured WSLG are functioning effectively.

The nine (9) provincial forums are in the process of reconfiguration in line with IGRFA. The reconfiguration entails interface of officials and politicians in respect of planning, budgeting and policy. The older forums have been retained as technical wings of regional forums. The only province that has not set up an IGR forum is Mpumalanga. The effectiveness of

the various forums varies in various respects. Gauteng has a vibrant forum, well representative of the sector, sits regularly, inputs into provincial as well as national sector planning processes, coordinates initiatives of sector players effectively. On the other extreme is Limpopo's forum which is in place, but has been negatively affected by changes in political leadership. The IGR forums are linked to Premiers Coordinating forums.

While the different regional forums are structured slightly differently in each of the provinces due to regional preferences and circumstances, DWAF has provided guidelines for structuring of the forums. Most of the forums are used to resolve problems, learn from each other and planning.

There are variations in terms of attendance of sector partners in all regions, with participation ranging from poor to good. See discussion re poor stakeholder participation (p. 205 of December 2008 ¼ Report. Vol 1: Consolidated Water Sector Report). The erratic participation by senior officials in some of the provincial forums needs attention. Some of the officials delegated are not at a decision making level, thereby reducing efficacy of forums. While some decisions can be taken under such circumstances, these do not translate to allocation of resources.

Of those that are normally invited to participate in the provincial forums that participated in the survey, attendance by sector partners varied widely, DWAF (92%), WSPs (78%), Water boards (67%) were rated highly on regular attendance. Municipal officials (61%), Councilors (57%) and SALGA (51%) were all given what could be considered to be mediocre scores. Among those who were scored low on attendance are DPLG (46%), Department of Health (11%), Department of Environmental Affairs, Tourism (11%), Department of Education (9%), Department of Agriculture (7%), CSOs (7%). While these scores do not reflect the variations of the different provinces, the results show that attendance of provincial forums by sector partners is a matter that requires attention. While attendance is not the only measure by which provincial forums can be measured, it is the baseline where collaboration starts.

At a provincial level the reconfiguration of provincial forums has unfolded reasonably well, but further support is needed. Focus should be placed on entering into collaboration agreements, starting with those sector partners that do not participate well.

At a national level there has been significant improvement with the reconfigured WSLG and MSB. More effort should be put on maintaining the attendance reflected at the last reconfigured WSLG, as well as improving meaningful contribution.

KPI 11.2 Provincial Water Sector Plans developed and reviewed annually

Measurement: Documents produced and approved by relevant collaborative structures.

Provincial Water Sector Plans are in place in all nine regions and at different stages of reviewed. In regions where forums are not fully functional PWSP plans are done by DWAF

through direct consultation with sector players on a one on one basis. The nature as well as the extent of collaboration in the development of PWSP would vary from region to region. Only four regions (Eastern Cape, Western Cape, Mpumalanga and North West) reported on the collaborative process used in formulation.³

The measure for this target should include at the very least have included content related measurement. One such could be the degree to which the plan reflects the interface between WS and WR.

KPI 11.3 National Water Sector Plan developed and reviewed annually.

Measurement: Document produced and approved by relevant collaborative structure.

The National Water Sector Plan is in place and was developed with the involvement of national water sector partners.⁴ No measurement of this plan relates to content related matters.

KPI 11.4 Cooperation of Integrated Water Resources Management in Africa, in support of NEPAD.

Measurement: DWAF reporting on water sector initiatives in Africa.

The participation of DWAF in SADC and other bilateral country to country technical committees is negatively impacted upon by general problem of shortage and continued loss of technical expertise within DWAF. As part of South Africa's contribution to the SADC agenda, regional integration and economic growth SADEC is involved in a regional technical skills support programme. Lesson learning and sharing (documentation of regional experiences) is a significant element of the collaboration. The process of engaging with WIN- SA is at conceptualization stage with the first meeting scheduled for the 9th of April 09.

SADEC Participation

- Integrate Water Resource Management Plans in place at SADC level. SADC limited by lack of financial resources and plans curtailed. The participation of South Africa in SADC collaboration structures needs to be fully monitored and reported on.
- A number of bilateral and multi-lateral bodies have been established between South Africa and its neighbours. These include,
 - Botswana/RSA Joint Permanent Technical Water Committee
 - Lesotho Highlands Water Commission

³ Consolidated DWAF Regional Report, 4th Quarter, 2007/2008; Water Services KFA 14.4.

⁴ DWAF, 2008, Masibambane III Programme (Water for Growth and Development), Assessment for the Release of the First Variable Tranche of Funding 2007/2008.

- Limpopo Basin Permanent Technical Committee
- Mozambique/RSA Joint Water Commission
- Orange/Senqu Basin Commission
- Swaziland/Mozambique/RSA Tripartite Permanent Technical Committee

We could not establish the state of each of these agreements, but some indication was made to the effect that some of the agreements may have lapsed.

What more could be done in the sector to ensure greater collaboration?

Because the technical provincial forums predate the IGR Act, no collaboration agreements were drawn up. While DWAF played a pivotal role in reconfiguring the provincial forums in line with the IGR Act, there no collaboration agreements were put in place. Implementation protocols are documents constituting a formal agreement between two or more parties, sometimes referred to as codes of conduct for the parties⁵. While any organ of state could initiate the conclusion of implementation protocols, DWAF as a sector leader should be playing this role. The implementation protocols should be extended to include informal IGR structures, nature and extent of participation in regional forums, reporting etc.

Key Recommendations

Regional and National collaboration

- Quantifiable and measurable performance goals and standards should be set for regional and national forums.
- With a view of improving collaboration, DWAF as a sector leader should speeding up the shift towards formalized collaboration arrangements, on that understanding that these encourage introspection of behaviour and communication. Collaboration agreements (implementation protocols) between DWAF and individual sector partners should be negotiated and signed, as tools for managing collaboration. Improve on reporting by sector partners through initiating collaboration agreements.

Efficiency

Main Findings:

Sector collaboration involves bringing different parties which have an intersecting objective/s. The very concept of bringing different parties around the table has time as well as cost implications. Given the time constraints under which the evaluation was conducted, it is not possible to discern indicative costs of collaboration as this would require some calculation of on non-collaboration. We have hence limited the scope of evaluation at a qualitative level, which is considered sufficient for providing direction. The cost of aligning policy, strategies and programmes between different government departments and different

⁵ DWAF (undated), Guidelines on the practical application of the Intergovernmental Relations Framework Act 13 of 2005 for DWAF.

spheres of government, outside of a collaboration arrangement would without doubt far outweigh those that can be achieved through collaboration.

Some of the current projects of the SADC Water Division include;

- SADC HYCOS (Hydrological Cycle Observation System) Phase 2
- Establishing of Zambezi River Basin Organisation.
- SADC Groundwater Management Project
- Energy Investment to address power shortages.
- Protection of indigenous plants in water.
- Water supply and sanitation
- Supporting the strengthening of River Basin Organisations.

The SADC Sectoral Committee of Ministers of Water and the SADC Water Resource Technical Committee (WRTC) used to be the driving force behind what is considered to be a very successful SADC Water Sector. The Sectoral Committee for Ministers of Water continues to exist as an *ad hoc* subcommittee of the Integrated Committee of Ministers and the Committee has been dormant for some time.

Key Recommendations:

DWAF should review KPI 11.1 to 11.4 goals and measurement with a view to develop a more textured system of measuring collaboration. The measurement should be quantifiable. This would need to be developed and agreed to by sector partners. The outcome of this should feed into the implementation protocols. Some of the issues that require refinement include;

- Common understanding of the role of the sector leader and measure to be used.
- Frequency of forum meetings. Degree of participation (attendance). There should be consensus on the level of person should participate in forum meetings and in technical committees.
- Interface of informal forums with IGR structures.
- Contribution to policy formulation processes. This entails respect for perspectives of other sector partners and ability to find common ground. Attendance of meetings turns to naught if presence does not translate into interpenetration of ideas.
- Participation in planning task teams (frequency and level of responsibility of person participating). The collaborative planning should not only measure who participated, but issues of meaningful participation of partners, the extent to which plans reflect the WS/WR interface, the extent to which the plan incorporate contributions of other sector partners.
- Common understanding of DWAF's regulatory function and associated responsibilities. What is expected from the sector partner?
- What lessons should each partner share with the sector.
- What are the protocols for joint implementation of programmes?

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