2030 WRG
KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE

ABOUT THE 2030 WATER RESOURCES GROUP

The 2030 WRG is a global partnership that brings governments, international financial institutions, nongovernmental organizations, and companies together to work towards a water-secure future. Specifically, the 2030 WRG aims to close the gap between water demand and supply by 2030 by fostering partnerships, facilitating open discussion, and driving change in water-stressed countries.

For more information, see 2030wrg.org.

www.2030wrg.org

water & sanitation
Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

SIWI

2030 Water Resources Group

INTRODUCTION

The 2030 Water Resources Group (2030 WRG) is a global public-private-civil society partnership that helps countries improve their water security by facilitating collective action.

To encourage countries within its network to identify and replicate best practice solutions from elsewhere, the 2030 WRG held an international exchange with eight countries in 2016. This inaugural exchange was held in South Africa, one of the earliest members of the 2030 WRG network, from February 29 to March 4, 2016.

The 2030 WRG chose South Africa to host the event so that participants could learn from the country's efforts to address municipal water losses and manage mine water; issues that are relevant to several 2030 WRG country partnerships.

Through presentations, discussions, and field visits, the event provided participants with practical insights from South Africa's water management and public-private-civil society experience; provided an opportunity for partners from across 2030 WRG countries to network and learn from each other; and enabled South African stakeholders, as hosts, to showcase the country's water management achievements to senior officials from other countries.

The knowledge exchange was a success. Participants found sharing knowledge, experiences, and perspectives from other countries particularly useful.

TOPICS

During the first two days of the exchange, participants attended presentations and assessed the advantages and disadvantages of various partnership models. In particular, participants discussed:

- **The challenge of managing mine water sustainably.**
- **The effectiveness and replicability of various partnership models.**
- **Ways to finance infrastructure and manage municipal, industrial, and mine water.**
- **The opportunities and barriers for private sector financing of water infrastructure in different countries.**
- **The challenge of private sector engagement in multi-stakeholder partnerships achieving impact at speed and scale.**

Participants also visited the eMalahleni Water Reclamation Plant and water infrastructure in the Mbombela Local Municipality managed by public-private partnerships. The field visits continued the dialogues about creating multi-stakeholder partnerships to finance water infrastructure and manage mine, municipal, and industrial water.

The following points emerged during the workshop's group discussions:

Non-revenue water
A risk and reward partnership model (implying a performance-based contract) between utilities and private contractors could reduce non-revenue water and improve the efficient and transparent use of water.

Wastewater treatment
Participants identified ways to treat wastewater cost-efficiently, such as mobile sewage treatment plants, as well as the forms of private-private or public-private partnerships that industrial wastewater treatment and reuse could take depending on the context. Alternatively, wastewater treatment and reuse could be linked to corporate social responsibility to help secure an industry's social license to operate. Finally, the discussion focused on the advantage of a cluster approach that builds partnerships to treat both municipal and industrial wastewater within a defined cluster or geographical area. Participants identified the need for more research into the efficiency of this method.

Water supply
The conversation focused on the costs and benefits of different water supply systems. While build-operate-transfer contracts and build and transfer contracts have the potential to raise much-needed private investment, participants questioned their sustainability once transferred to public agencies. On the other hand, community-driven systems, while locally owned, can fragment service delivery, creating coordination problems or additional costs.

Financing water infrastructure
Ways to finance water infrastructure are included under the discussions of non-revenue water, wastewater management, and water supply. To ensure the success of private financing, participants suggested reviewing tariffs to allow for loan repayment.

NEXT STEPS

During the wrap-up session, country teams identified the actions they planned to take, based on lessons learned during the knowledge exchange, and areas of interest. The three most commonly identified areas of work among participants were:

- **Adopting South Africa's No Drop system.**
- **Building capacity to develop and monitor public-private partnerships.**
- **Holding further knowledge exchanges on mine-water management.**

BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS

Country teams from Bangladesh, India, Kenya, Mexico, Mongolia, Peru, and Tanzania joined South African participants and experts, a journalist, and IFC and SIWI staff. In total, 87 participants from eight countries attended the 2030 WRG Knowledge Exchange.