



TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR A DIRECTED WRC PROJECT

THEMATIC AREA	ADVISORY SERVICES
TITLE	DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL SANITATION PROGRAMME OF ACTION (NSPA)

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this Terms of Reference is to appoint a Professional Services Provider (PSP) to establish and operate a Programme Management Unit (PMU) to support the development and implementation of the National Sanitation Programme of Action (NSPA).
- 1.2 The PMU shall provide technical, planning, coordination, stakeholder-engagement, monitoring and evaluation, financing-facilitation, capacity-building and advisory support to Department Water and Sanitation (DWS), Department Science, Technology and Innovation (DSTI), Water Research Commission (WRC) and identified Water Services Authorities (WSA's).
- 1.3 The assignment is intended to accelerate access to sanitation services and the eradication of open defecation through improved planning support along the sanitation service chain and through the appropriate use of innovative technologies, including Water Efficient Sanitation Solutions (WESS).

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 South Africa faces a persistent sanitation crisis characterised by significant service-delivery backlogs, households using unsafe sanitation and wastewater treatment works under severe operational pressure.
- 2.2 DWS has published the National Sanitation Integrated Plan (NSIP) to guide national, provincial and local actions towards the eradication of sanitation backlogs and improved sanitation service delivery.
- 2.3 To operationalize the NSIP, DWS, in collaboration with DSTI, aims to develop and implement the NSPA. The NSPA is intended to translate the NSIP into a practical programme of action with defined implementation support, coordination, monitoring and reporting mechanisms.

- 2.4** This collaboration seeks to accelerate service delivery and clarify how support will be provided to WSAs towards achieving sustainable sanitation services and the eradication of sanitation backlogs by 2030.
- 2.5** The DSTI Decadal Plan emphasises the development of future-oriented innovative solutions that support sustainable water and sanitation security and proposes budget coordination across government sectors as a systemic enabler of innovation.
- 2.6** Through the SASTEP Programme, the WRC and DSTI have supported the commercialisation and scaling of innovative non-sewered sanitation systems called water efficient sanitation system (WESS). The NSPA will support the appropriate scale-up of sanitation solutions in line with the applicable national water and sanitation service standards and sector requirements.
- 2.7** The NSPA must promote sanitation systems appropriate for high-, medium- and low-density settlements. The choice of solution must be based on technical and service-delivery considerations, including settlement density, groundwater pollution risk, lifecycle cost, available bulk infrastructure, water availability, user acceptability, operations and maintenance requirements, sustainability, and economies of scale.
- 2.8** Within the applicable planning framework, WSAs are expected to include measures in their WSDPs to eradicate unimproved pit latrines, bucket toilets and open defecation, and to consider water-efficient sanitation options such as sustainable non-sewered sanitation systems (NSSS) and Decentralized Wastewater systems (DWWTS) where appropriate.
- 2.9** Addressing gaps across the sanitation service chain through context-specific solutions aligned to the new 2025 norms and standards using a sector-wide approach is necessary to reduce the timeframe for achieving universal access to safely managed sanitation.
- 2.10** The PSP will support the development and implementation of the NSPA through a structured methodology that converts national objectives into practical Water Service Authority (WSA) support interventions, financing-facilitation outputs, technology-assessment support, monitoring and reporting outputs and policy-learning outputs.
- 2.11** The project aims to accelerate sanitation service delivery by supporting a transformative innovation policy environment, strengthening sanitation planning, supporting infrastructure-development readiness and enabling sanitation-service financing pathways.

3. THE OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT

- 3.1** Develop and support implementation of the NSPA and measure performance against the NSIP priority areas and the short-, medium- and long-term actions in the 10-year roadmap.
- 3.2** Provide defined technical assistance to priority WSAs, up to a maximum of 144 WSAs and subject to the approved Implementation Plan and available funding, to improve sanitation

service-delivery planning along the sanitation service chain, with special focus on WSAs with the highest access backlogs.

- 3.3** Support incentive and recognition mechanisms for WSAs that demonstrate measurable progress in sanitation planning, implementation readiness, backlog eradication and integration of innovation into sanitation service delivery.
- 3.4** Advocate for and support the appropriate deployment of innovative sanitation technologies, particularly WESS, in order to accelerate sanitation provision where such technologies are technically, socially, financially and institutionally suitable.
- 3.5** Support financing-facilitation and resource-mobilisation pathways for sanitation projects without requiring the PSP to secure funding or bind any funder, WSA, municipality, DWS, DSTI, WRC or WPO to a funding commitment.
- 3.6** Support policy learning, policy-dialogue and evidence-based recommendations to enable sustainable sanitation planning, technology adoption and service-delivery reform.

4. PROJECT SCOPE

The PSP, operating as the PMU under WRC contract management, will perform the assignment through the following seven workstreams to ensure systems-level coordination rather than isolated project interventions.

4.1 Limitation of PSP role.

- The PSP's role is limited to technical support, facilitation, analysis, advisory services, documentation, reporting, coordination and project-management support. The PSP shall not exercise the statutory powers of DWS, DSTI, WRC, any WSA or any municipality, and shall not bind any organ of state, municipality, WSA, funder or stakeholder to any decision, approval, funding commitment, technology adoption or implementation obligation.

4.2 Coordination and Stakeholder Engagement

- Develop and implement an awareness and stakeholder-engagement strategy to promote NSPA objectives to WSAs and provincial and national stakeholders.
- Align sanitation-service planning across relevant WSA functions, including spatial planning, human settlements and water and sanitation services.
- Coordinate engagement between DWS, DSTI, WRC (SASTEP Programme), Water Partnership Office (WPO) (DBSA) and Provincial Sanitation Task Teams (PSTT's), subject to the relevant agreements and approved governance structures.
- Coordinate engagement with Department of Human Settlement (DHS), Department Basic Education (DBE), Department Forestry Fisheries and Environment (DFFE), Cooperative Governance and

Traditional Affairs (CoGTA), Municipal Infrastructure Support Agent (MISA), South African Local Government Agency (SALGA) and the National Sanitation Task Team (NSTT) to promote integrated planning and prioritisation.

- Communicate clearly how the PMU is aligned with DWS, DSTI, WPO and WRC/SASTEP, as a support mechanism and identify complementary support that may be accessed once business plans and relevant approvals are in place.

4.3 Technical Support and Capacity Building

- Develop an NSPA Implementation Framework to support the achievement of at least 90% access to sanitation by 2030 and 100% access beyond 2030.
- Facilitate the review of existing WSA situational analyses and sanitation action plans and support their transition into Water Sector Development Plans (WSDPs), Integrated Development Plans (IDPs) and relevant municipal planning processes.
- Develop or revise sanitation business plans and technical reports for priority WSAs, including options for NSS and WESS where appropriate.
- Where WESS is identified as a suitable option, refer relevant project proposals or concepts to WPO or other approved support mechanisms for project-preparation support, where applicable.
- Facilitate awareness, capacity-building and inter-municipal learning platforms on sanitation planning, WESS and the sanitation service chain.

4.4 Technology Deployment, Assessment and Innovation

- Accelerate adoption of appropriate, sustainable, innovative and water-efficient sanitation solutions through knowledge sharing, lessons learned from pilots, technology option assessments and decision-support materials.
- Facilitate appropriate WESS consideration in human settlements and school sanitation contexts where WSAs are responsible or involved.
- Support technology deployment readiness and scaling support for validated WESS through programmes such as SASTEP, the SAFE Initiative and WPO scale-up efforts, subject to applicable mandates and agreements.
- Use available databases and verified data sources to track performance, acceptability, reliability, lifecycle cost and suitability of WESS and other appropriate systems, and develop guidance on suitable technologies for different settlement types.
- Support community-based sanitation models that empower local entrepreneurship, economic inclusion and standardised service-delivery models across the sanitation service chain, using verifiable data from WRC, UKZN WASH R&D and other accepted institutions.

- Identify and facilitate appropriate innovation-incentive opportunities for technology improvement and emerging sanitation technologies, including possible DSTI tax-incentive pathways where applicable.

4.5 Financial Facilitation

- Review and record sanitation projects allocated funding for improving access across the service chain and assess whether WSAs are prioritising sanitation projects in grant funding over 3-, 5- and 10-year planning horizons.
- Provide inputs into grant-framework and project-preparation discussions to ensure that project components such as operations, maintenance, monitoring, user support and sustainability are considered.
- Support WSAs to align plans and prepare documentation for potential funding pathways, and work with WPO, where appropriate, to identify funding opportunities, including grants, blended finance, loans and PPP-related pathways.
- Support WSAs to develop financially viable sanitation delivery models in consultation with WPO and other approved stakeholders.
- The PSP shall not be required to secure funding, guarantee approvals, procure lenders, conclude PPPs or bind any funder, WSA, DWS, DSTI, WRC or WPO to any financing commitment.

4.6 Transformative Innovation Policy (TIP) Environment

- Support knowledge management and learning to build TIP capacity within WSAs and relevant sector stakeholders through policy and socio- technical dialogues, policy briefs and learning forums.
- Undertake research on policy enablers and inhibitors and draft evidence-based recommendations for policy reform and sector decision-making.
- Facilitate and coordinate learning on the institutionalisation of WESS and other appropriate sanitation solutions in municipal planning and service delivery, in partnership with SALGA where applicable.
- Support policy directionality towards sustainable, acceptable and resilient socio-technical sanitation systems.
- Support recommendations for transformative investment in WESS and appropriate sanitation implementation.

4.7 Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting

- Review and recommend improvements to the NSIP M&E framework for purposes of NSPA implementation and sanitation project reporting.
- Propose a conceptual online data-collection model and dashboard visual based on existing DWS reporting systems such as INSIS and relevant external systems such as UKZN WASH R&D InfraTrack, MIG, human-settlements and WPO platforms, where data sharing is lawful and approved.

- Support DWS in monitoring the implementation of WSA NSIP action plans, including SFD-related analysis where applicable, and provide mid-year and annual progress reports on sanitation projects and grant-spend observations where reliable data is available.
- Collect and consolidate data to support DWS Annual Performance Plan (APP) and SDG 6.2 reporting, and support harmonised report formats.
- Track progress of WSA support interventions with DWS regional offices and report quarterly.
- Provide annual reports summarising outcomes, lessons learned, risks and policy or implementation recommendations.

4.8 Recognition and Awards

- Develop a tiered performance-based matrix through which WSAs may be assessed against delivery progress following PMU support interventions.
- Assess potential recognition criteria linked to NSS, onsite sanitation, non-sewered sanitation and relevant regulatory or performance frameworks, including possible alignment with sector recognition instruments.
- Recognise WSAs that integrate TIP approaches into planning and implementation readiness.
- Recognise consistency and integration of sanitation activities across the service chain and collaboration with relevant departments.
- Support recognition events (in partnership with DWS and stakeholders) and identify potential incentive mechanisms to encourage accelerated sanitation provision across the service chain.

5. PROJECT DELIVERABLES

WRC will manage the PSP contract, while DWS and, where applicable, DSTI will provide technical oversight through approved governance structures. Proposers are expected to align project deliverables to the following:

No.	Deliverable	Minimum payable output / description	Timeline	Responsibility
5.1	Project Inception Report	Implementation approach, multi-disciplinary team composition and structure, stakeholder map and engagement approach, 36-month execution plan, WSA prioritisation methodology, data-management approach, risk register, quality-assurance plan, reporting plan, skills transfer and handover plan to key stakeholders, and costed deliverable schedule aligned to the project scope, NSIP, DSTI Decadal Plan and applicable 2025 norms and standards service standards	Within 1 month of commencement	PSP verified by WRC
5.2	NSPA Implementation Framework	Detailed NSPA framework to support 90% access to sanitation by 2030 and 100% access beyond 2030. Must include strategic interventions, low-hanging fruit, implementation sequencing, governance arrangements, WSA support model, financing-facilitation pathways, M&E linkages and risk controls.	Within 2 months	PSP (WRC, DWS and DSTI oversight where applicable)
5.3	Integrated Stakeholder Analysis and Coordination Plan	Stakeholder map and coordination plan for DHS, DBE, DFFE, DoH, CoGTA, MISA, SALGA, WPO, SASTEP, PSTTs, NSTT and other approved stakeholders. Must include roles, engagement schedule, reporting channels and escalation process. Must include a skills transfer plan to DWS, DSTI, WRC and other recommended stakeholders and progress to be reported on annually.	Within 2 months	PSP (verified by WRC)
5.4	Reviewed Framework, Dashboard Concept and Reporting Tools	Review and recommend improvements to the NSIP M&E framework for NSPA implementation; propose a conceptual online data-collection model and dashboard visual; update Excel-based reporting tools; and produce templates for WSA progress, grants and SDG 6.2 reporting, subject to data availability and lawful use and access (POPIA).	Within 3 months	PSP (with DWS technical oversight)

No.	Deliverable	Minimum payable output / description	Timeline	Responsibility
5.5	Tiered Recognition and Awards Framework	Tiered performance and recognition framework for WSAs, including performance matrix, assessment methodology, annual assessment process for priority WSAs, links to existing performance instruments and proposed recognition or incentive mechanisms. Provide facilitation and advisory support on finalization.	First draft within 4 months	PSP (with WRC and DWS oversight)
5.6	NSS Criteria Assessment Plan	Plan for assessing proposed NSS criteria under the NSIP regulatory framework for onsite and non-sewered sanitation services, including readiness assessment, gap analysis, available standards, possible standards adoption and recommendations for further standards development.	Within 6 months	PSP (with DWS/DSTI technical input where applicable)
5.7	WSA Situational Analysis and Action Plan Support Packs	Technical assistance to priority WSAs, up to a maximum of 144 WSAs as identified in the approved Implementation Plan, to update situational-analysis reports and review sanitation action plans. The payable output for each WSA is a support pack containing, where applicable: data request record, stakeholder-engagement record, updated situational analysis, reviewed action plan, WSDP alignment note, implementation/referral recommendations and DWS regional verification record. Signature by a Municipal Manager is a target outcome and not a payment condition where the PSP demonstrates completion of the required support pack and reasonable documented efforts to secure WSA review or signature.	Quarterly / ongoing in accordance with approved plan	PSP (managed by WRC, with DWS regional input)
5.8	Business Plan and Technical Report Support Packs	Technical assistance to identified priority WSAs in developing or revising sanitation business plans and technical reports, including reports relating to WESS, off-grid systems and decentralised systems where appropriate. The payable deliverable is the completed or revised business plan, technical report or referral pack submitted to WRC, DWS and the relevant WSA. Approval by a WSA, Municipal Manager, council, funder or external stakeholder is not guaranteed and is not a payment condition where the PSP has completed the required support output to the accepted standard.	Quarterly / ongoing	PSP (WRC and DWS oversight)

No.	Deliverable	Minimum payable output / description	Timeline	Responsibility
5.9	WESS Technology Assessment and Scaling Support Reports	Biannual technology assessment and scaling support reports for appropriate WESS options, using available validated data and inputs from WRC, SASTEP, UKZN WASH R&D, DWS, DSTI, SALGA and other approved sources. The PSP shall not certify, or accredit technologies but could be requested to independently validate technologies (this will be expressly required in the PSP contract and supported by an approved methodology, budget and qualified technical resources insourced or outsourced). Reports must include technology-option assessment, settlement-type suitability, implementation prerequisites, risks, lifecycle-cost considerations, regulatory considerations, user-acceptability considerations and scaling recommendations. Participation by UKZN WASH R&D or other institutions is subject to availability and applicable agreements if needed.	Biannual	PSP (with WRC, DSTI, SALGA oversight and UKZN WASH R&D support where applicable)
5.10	WESS Capacity-building and Awareness Workshops	Facilitate WESS capacity-building and awareness workshops for WSAs, DWS and DSTI officials in all nine provinces in accordance with the approved Implementation Plan. Payable outputs include workshop plans, approved materials, attendance registers, presentations, training records, evaluation forms, workshop reports and consolidated lessons learned. Participation by UKZN WASH R&D, WRC, WPO or other institutions is subject to availability and applicable agreements.	Quarterly / as approved	PSP (with WRC, UKZN WASH R&D and WPO teams where applicable)
5.11	Resource Mobilisation and Financing Pipeline Reports	Quarterly or biannual financing pipeline and resource-mobilisation support reports in collaboration with WPO and other approved stakeholders. The PSP's obligation is to identify potential financing pathways, package project concepts, map funding sources, prepare referral packs, support business-case development and track financing engagements. The PSP shall not be required to secure funding, guarantee approvals, procure lenders, conclude PPPs or bind any funder, WSA, DWS, DSTI, WRC or WPO to any financing commitment.	Quarterly, with biannual consolidated reports where approved	PSP (with support of WPO, managed by WRC)

No.	Deliverable	Minimum payable output / description	Timeline	Responsibility
5.12	Transformative Policy Research and Briefs	Policy research outputs and policy briefs identifying socio-technical barriers, TIP municipal readiness and maturity, policy enablers, policy inhibitors and implementation recommendations for the scale-up of appropriate sanitation solutions, including WESS where relevant. As far as possible the PSP is expected to align to existing guidance documents that may be emanating from sectoral reform processes, WRC research, WPO standardization approaches for NSS and only generate new knowledge if gaps still exist. The PSP provides evidence-based recommendations only and is not responsible for amending legislation, municipal by-laws, national standards or policy instruments.	Quarterly / as approved	PSP (with DSTI and academic input where applicable)
5.13	Mid-year, Annual and Provincial Progress Reports	For each financial year of the contract period, prepare one mid-year national progress report, one annual national progress report and nine provincial progress summaries. Reports must consolidate progress, risks, lessons learned, WSA support outputs, sanitation backlog trends, grant-spend observations where data is available and policy or implementation recommendations.	Mid-year and annually	PMU (PSP), verified by WRC
5.14	Project Governance Meeting Support and Records	Participate in and support approved project governance meetings, including project management meetings, PSTT engagements, NSTT engagements, Reference Group meetings and other approved meetings in accordance with the Implementation Plan. Payable outputs include meeting preparation, attendance, presentation inputs, minutes or records of decision, action logs and follow-up reports. Additional travel or meetings outside the approved Implementation Plan require prior written approval.	Quarterly / as scheduled	PSP (planned with WRC (IA)
5.15	NSPA Evaluation, Close-out and Handover Reports	Comprehensive NSPA evaluation report, close-out report and handover report documenting work completed, deliverables achieved, outstanding matters, risks, lessons learned, data sources, stakeholder engagements, recommendations, remaining path to 2030 and all documents, tools, templates and records required for continuation or audit.	Month 36 and close-out period	PSP (subject to WRC and DWS approval)

6. Deliverable acceptance and payment

- Payment shall be deliverable-based and linked to the approved payment milestone schedule. A deliverable shall be payable only once submitted by the PSP, verified by WRC and accepted by the authorised DWS technical representative and, where applicable, the DSTI technical representative. Once approved, the SP will be requested to submit an invoice and will be paid within 30 days.
- Where a deliverable depends on WSA, municipal, funder or third-party cooperation or approval, the PSP shall be assessed against the required support output and documented reasonable efforts, not against approvals outside the PSP's control. These must be built into inception plan and risk plan clearly outlining assumptions and dependencies.
- Failure by a stakeholder to approve, sign or implement a document shall not prevent payment if the PSP has produced the accepted deliverable and complied with the approved methodology, acceptance criteria and reasonable-efforts requirements.
- All deliverables must be submitted in editable electronic format and PDF format, together with supporting records, data sources, meeting records, attendance registers, verification records and any other evidence reasonably required by WRC, DWS or the relevant governance structure.

7. METHODOLOGY

- A full proposal is required and methodology must include a detailed project plan as per deliverables outline in the table above and should include cost-per-deliverable schedule, resource plan, stakeholder-engagement plan, WSA prioritisation approach, data-management approach, M&E approach, risk register, quality-assurance plan, travel plan and deliverable schedule.
- Disbursements, travel and administrative costs must be included in deliverable pricing and may not be claimed separately unless expressly approved in the PSP contract.
- The PSP should develop a smart plan that run certain processes in parallel to streamline timelines and deliverables
- The teams are expected to plan engagements smartly to ensure strong face to face engagements.
- The PSP must identify assumptions, dependencies and items outside its control, including WSA cooperation, municipal approvals, data availability, council decisions, funder decisions and availability of external technical partners.
- The PSP must design an outcomes-based programme to ensure at least 10 to 15 % of 144 WSAs are supported in year 1 with remaining WSA supported in year 2 (ca.45%) and year 3 (ca.45%).
- High level project management and coordination must be channelled through WRC as Implementing Agent and contract manager but day to day programme coordination and management must have a dedicated project leader. DWS and DSTI project managers will provide technical oversight through the approved governance structures and the applicable agreements.

8. PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

- Payment will be based on accepted deliverables rather than time spent. No payment shall be made where work is outstanding, incomplete, unsupported or not accepted against the approved deliverable criteria.
- Annual progress reports must be submitted through the approved governance process and, where required, to the Multisectoral Reference Group for endorsement or noting.
- Project management meetings will be held to consider progress, challenges, risks and mitigation measures. Progress reports and deliverables must be aligned to the approved Implementation Plan and the ToR (Table above section 5).
- Financial resources must be managed to support the approved PSP workplan milestones, including human resources, administration, communication and travel, subject to approved deliverable pricing and the PSP contract.
- The PSP must maintain a deliverable register, version-control register, data-source register, stakeholder-engagement register, decision log, risk register and issues log throughout the assignment.

- On completion of the assignment, the PSP must submit all close-out, evaluation and handover materials to WRC, and WRC must submit the approved close-out package to DWS and, where applicable, DSTI.

9. REQUIRED EXPERTISE

- The PSP team must have demonstrated knowledge of the water services sector and the full sanitation service chain, including sanitation planning, municipal legislative and planning frameworks, WSDPs, IDPs, sanitation infrastructure, non-sewered sanitation, WESS, asset management, operations and maintenance, community development, socio-economic analysis, environmental considerations, governance, finance, policy, M&E and project management.
- The PSP proposal must identify named key personnel and stipulate which roles they play in the team as stated below:
 - Project Director or Team leader (management and coordination of plan);
 - Sanitation planning specialist;
 - Municipal infrastructure engineer or technologist;
 - NSSS/ WESS or sanitation technology specialist;
 - Monitoring and evaluation specialist;
 - Municipal finance or resource-mobilisation specialist;
 - Policy, research or transformative innovation policy specialist;
 - Stakeholder-engagement and capacity-building specialist;
 - Data-management or dashboard/reporting specialist; and
 - Project administrator or contract-support resource.
- The PSP must submit CVs, qualifications, professional registrations where applicable, role descriptions, time allocation and evidence of relevant experience for all key personnel.
- Replacement of key personnel after award may occur only with WRC's prior written approval and with personnel of equivalent or superior qualifications and experience.

10. OWNERSHIP, CONFIDENTIALITY AND DATA PROTECTION

- The PSP may not publish, disclose, distribute, commercialise or use any project deliverable, data, municipal information, technology information, report, recommendation or confidential information without prior written approval from WRC and the relevant information owner.
- The PSP must comply with confidentiality, POPIA, PAIA, information-security, record-retention and lawful-disclosure requirements contained in the PSP contract and applicable law.

11. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

- The PSP, its directors, employees, experts and subcontractors must disclose any actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest before appointment and throughout the contract period.
- The PSP may not participate in any decision, recommendation, referral, technology assessment, funding recommendation or stakeholder process in which it has an undisclosed financial, commercial, professional or personal interest.
- The PSP must disclose any relationship with technology suppliers, WSAs, consultants, funders, contractors, NGOs or other stakeholders that may reasonably create a conflict or perception of bias.
- Failure to disclose a conflict of interest may result in disqualification, withholding of payment, termination and any other remedy available in law or under the PSP contract.

12. SUBCONTRACTING

- The PSP may not subcontract any material part of the assignment without WRC's prior written approval but can disclose collaborating partners up front in the proposal.

13. 14 QUALITY ASSURANCE

- All deliverables must be evidence-based, technically sound, properly referenced, quality-reviewed by the PSP before submission, and submitted in editable electronic format and PDF format unless WRC directs otherwise.
- The PSP must support audit, verification, close-out and handover processes by providing records, supporting documentation and working papers reasonably required by WRC, DWS, DSTI or any lawful oversight authority.

14. DURATION

- 3 years (36 months)
- The contract shall not extend beyond the duration of the applicable funding agreement unless that funding agreement is extended in writing before expiry and the availability of funds is confirmed.
- The PSP must allow for a structured close-out, audit-support and handover period within the contract period, unless otherwise approved in writing by WRC and the relevant funder.

15. BUDGET (VAT inclusive)

- The total budget available is R10 800 000 (3 years)

Year 1 budget = R 1 800 000

Year 2 budget – R 4 500 000

Year 3 budget – R 4 500 000

Note: All deliverables and costs must be VAT inclusive

16. TECHNICAL ENQUIRIES

For further information, please contact:

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EXECUTIVE RR MEMO

SUBMISSION TO EXCO

FROM:	
Stakeholder and Communications	✓
Research, Development and Innovation	
Finance	
Corporate Services	

Date of TopCo Meeting	N/A
Date of EXCO Meeting	N/A Round Robin
Meeting number	N/A

TO:	
TechManco	
ManCo	
TopCo	
EXCO Direct	✓

For Approval	✓
For Noting	

SUBJECT: APPROVAL TO ACCEPT APPOINTMENT AS AN IMPLEMENTING AGENT FOR ESTABLISHING AND MANAGING THE SANITATION PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT UNIT

1. Purpose

This memo seeks EXCO's approval for the Water Research Commission (WRC) to accept its appointment as an implementing agent (IA) to establish and manage a Programme Management Unit (PMU) to develop and implement the National Sanitation Programme of Action (NSPA) to operationalise the National Sanitation Integrated Plan (NSIP).

2. Background

As South Africa's leading knowledge partner on sanitation research and innovation, especially aligned to the Water Efficient Sanitation Systems, the WRC through its SASTEP programme, has played a central role in engagements with the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS), the Department of Science, Technology and Innovation (DSTI), and other key stakeholders to shape a joint initiative to operationalise the NSIP, a ten-year plan, through the National Sanitation Programme Action (NSPA). On 29 May 2026, the WRC received an official appointment letter from the Director-General of DWS confirming its role as the Implementing Agent for the NSPA (**Annexure A**). The initiative is intended to accelerate sanitation service delivery through sustainable, innovative solutions by providing technical support to municipalities, addressing sanitation infrastructure and service delivery challenges, and promoting appropriate WESS. The PMU will operate for 36 months from the date of appointment of the professional service provider.

3. Discussion / Motivation

The appointment will enable the WRC to play a strategic leadership and advisory role in advancing South Africa's sanitation agenda by bridging the gap between policy and implementation. The proposed partnership is aligned with the WRC mandate, the strategic outcome of building an innovative water sector, and the scaling up of the work pioneered on water-efficient sanitation systems. Through the PMU, the partners will support municipalities in addressing key sanitation challenges, including service delivery backlogs, access to grants, infrastructure failures, limited technical capacity, and financing constraints.

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The PMU will strengthen Water Services Authorities (WSAs) through:

- **Coordination & Stakeholder Engagement:** Aligning spatial planning, procurement, and human settlements with sanitation services.
- **Technical Support & Capacity Building:** Providing direct assistance to WSAs to develop viable sanitation business plans.
- **Technology Deployment & Innovation:** Validating and scaling innovative WESS to ensure they meet national standards and user needs.
- **Financial Facilitation:** Working with the Water Partnerships Office (WPO) to broker funding, including grants and private investment.
- **Transformative Innovation Policy Environment:** Influencing policy reforms and institutionalizing sustainable sanitation practices.
- **Monitoring, Evaluation & Reporting** of the work implemented on the ground.
- **Recognition and awards coordination:** Proposing and coordination recognition mechanisms.

The Terms of Reference for appointing the PMU will be developed jointly with DWS and DSTI.

4. Source of Authority and legal requirements

It is a requirement that all WRC strategic partnerships are submitted for EXCO approval before finalising the partnership agreement.

5. Financial implications

The total cost to establish and manage the PMU to develop and implement the National Sanitation Programme of Action (NSPA) is R12.6 million (VAT inclusive) with the DWS and DSTI commitments of R8 million and R4,6 million, respectfully. The WRC will further charge a management fee of 5% on each department's leveraged funds. Two separate partnership Agreements will be developed with DWS and DSTI.

Total project cost	DWS commitment	DSTI commitment
R12.6 million	R8 Million • R2 M – 2026-27 • R3 M – 2027-28 • R3 M – 2028-29	R 4.6 million tranches to be worked out in the MoA
5% Management	To be calculated with each partner	

6. Risks

The delay in appointing the PMU caused by unfulfilled funding commitments from DWS and DSTI. Consequently, the WRC will introduce protective clauses in the PMU agreement to clearly define financial tranches and grant the WRC the right to amend or terminate the agreement if departmental funds are not received on schedule.

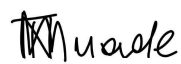
7. Recommendation

It is recommended that EXCO approve the WRC's acceptance (**Annexure B**) of its appointment as an implementing agent to establish and manage a Programme Management Unit to develop and implement the National Sanitation Programme of Action.

Prepared by Head: BD&P Name: Dr M Maahlo	Signature:  Date: Jun 18, 2026
Supported by Senior RM Dr Valerie Naidoo	Signature:  Date: Jun 19, 2026
Recommended by acting Exec S&C Name: Ms Ndundu Sithole	Signature:  Date: Jun 19, 2026

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APPROVED/NOTED BY EXCO	Conditions / Comments	
	Signature: 	Date: Jun 25, 2026

NO	EXECUTIVE MANAGER / HEAD OF KSA	DECISION (Please type approved or not approved on the merged block)		SIGNATURE	DATE
1	Name: Ms Ndundu Sithole Acting Executive: S&C	APPROVED			
		NOT APPROVED			
2	Name: Prof Stanley Liphadzi Executive RDI	APPROVED	Suported		Jun 25, 2026
		NOT APPROVED			
3	Name: Ms Talitha Muade Executive Operations	APPROVED	Approved		Jun 20, 2026
		NOT APPROVED			
4	Name: Mr Sithembiso Shabangu Acting Executive: CS	APPROVED		 Sithembiso Shabangu@wrc.co.za (Jun 21, 2026 10:52:11 GMT+2)	Jun 21, 2026
		NOT APPROVED			
5	Name: Ms Nicolene Viviers Acting Chief Financial Officer	APPROVED	Approved		Jun 22, 2026
		NOT APPROVED			
6.	Dr Jennifer Molwantwa Chief Executive Officer	APPROVED	Approved as ACEO		Jun 25, 2026
		NOT APPROVED			
Upon obtaining all signatures deliver to: COMPLIANCE: CEO'S OFFICE MANAGER		EXECUTIVE RECORD		Pp	

CONFIDENTIAL

EXCO RR memo - WRC partnership to establish and manage the Sanitation PMU V2

Final Audit Report

2026-06-25

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