

# **Water and Sanitation Service delivery – a process of continuous improvement: A case study from eThekweni Municipality, Durban, South Africa**

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**Abstract:** eThekweni Water and Sanitation (EWS) is the department responsible for the roll out of water and sanitation service delivery within the eThekweni Municipality in Durban, South Africa. Of the more than 3.6 million customers, it is estimated that in the region of a third are fully serviced, a third have services which are insufficient or defective, and a third have limited or no services. In addition, areas serviced by EWS include sparse rural areas, dense informal settlements in the city and surrounds, and well developed first class suburbs. This presents a number of challenges to finding solutions that will meet the requirements of all consumers. The approach taken by EWS is one of continuous evaluation and evolution which aims to provide services at different levels which are most suited to the area. This paper analyses this approach and discusses the successes and lessons learnt.

**Keywords:** Keyword1; keyword2; keyword3

## **Introduction**

The eThekweni Water and Sanitation Unit (EWS) has the responsibility of managing water and sanitation services within the eThekweni Municipality. In 1996 the boundaries of the municipality were extended to create a Metro, and then again in 2001 to become a Umicity, which resulted in an increase in the number of households with no access to water or sanitation being incorporated into the EWS service mandate.

It was realised that in order to meet the different demands of service delivery to such a diverse customer base, innovative solutions needed to be found. In 2001, the most basic form of sanitation present in areas not linked to the water borne sewerage system were pit latrines, both unimproved and improved. Dense informal settlements had limited services, with open defecation taking place or home-built pit latrines being utilised. Water supply to these areas was also problematic. EWS therefore embarked on a process of identifying ways in which service delivery to these areas could be provided which was equitable, environmentally, socially and financially sustainable, and technically excellent.

## **Material and Methods**

The approach taken by EWS was cyclical process (see Figure 1) which involved innovative thinking, interaction with communities, detailed research, and continuous improvement through piloting, monitoring and redesigning where necessary. Memoranda of Understanding were signed with research organisations at tertiary educational institutions such that implementation was supported by scientific fact.

The roll out of ventilated improved pit emptying services, and the installation of urine diversion toilets and community ablution blocks demonstrates this cyclical and evolving process and are used as case studies to analyse the success of this approach.

## Results and Conclusions

### References

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