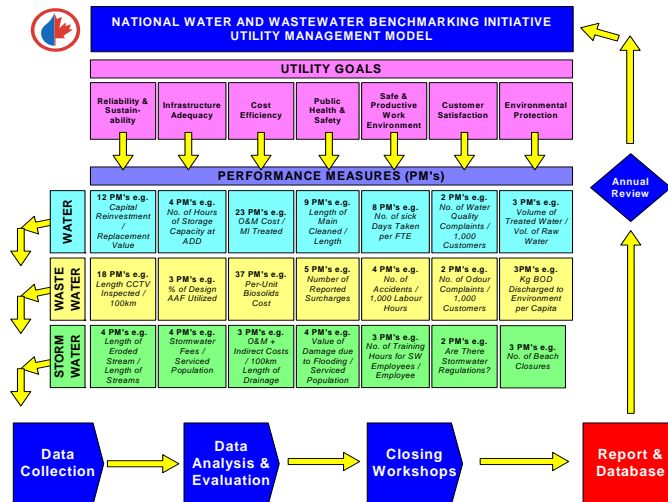


South Africa and Canada Water and Wastewater Benchmarking Project



PROJECT DETAILS

CLIENT: Department of Water Affairs and Forestry (DWAF)
LOCATION: South Africa

REFERENCE INFORMATION

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PROBLEM

The South African Department of Water Affairs is striving to develop a national Benchmarking initiative for the country's Water Boards (bulk) and Local Government (retail) water and wastewater service providers.

CHALLENGES

A number of challenges existed including the fragmentation of existing Benchmarking initiatives at the bulk and retail level, incorporating Bench-marking into the Department's regulatory functions and to determine how to Benchmark the country's numerous rural water and wastewater supply schemes.

SOLUTION

The introduction of selected water and wastewater sector professionals to the National Water and Wastewater Benchmarking Initiative in Canada, as well as playing a consultative role with water sector leaders in South Africa as part of a Technical Assistance Facility project funded by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

BENEFITS

The implementation of a national Benchmarking initiative would help the Department to compare one institution's performance with another's, monitor trends in cost input versus output, ensure that institutions are meeting their service and performance requirements at minimum sustainable cost and ensure that water users are satisfied and informed about the performance of their water and wastewater service providers.

Earth Tech Inc. assisted the South African Department of Water Affairs and Forestry (DWAF) in providing South African water sector professionals with exposure to the Canadian National Water and Wastewater Benchmarking Initiative, and to explore the possibility of setting up a similar project for South African water and wastewater utilities. The project was funded through the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) as part of its Technical Assistance Facility (TAF) program, which is a short-term intervention with the aim of transferring skills to key government officials in developing countries. Earth Tech Inc. has been the project leader for the Canadian National Water and Wastewater Benchmarking Initiative for the past seven years, which is considered as one of the most advanced public sector Benchmarking initiatives worldwide. This project served as a prime example for DWAF in its efforts to establish a similar initiative for South Africa's Water Boards (wholesale supply) and Local Government (retail supply).

Key objectives of the project were to establish a short to long-term program to exchange ideas and experiences between Canada and South Africa and to provide municipalities and politicians with an understanding of the importance and need for Benchmarking water and wastewater service providers. A strategic objective was also to determine how Benchmarking could support the newly created regulatory functions of the Department of Water Affairs.

As a result of this project, a South African National Benchmarking Coordinating Committee was established to manage and guide future water and wastewater utility Benchmarking activities in South Africa.