

Water and Sanitation in the News

Young innovators vital to overcoming local water challenges

Although South Africa faced complex challenges relating to water and sanitation, it also provided opportunities for entrepreneurs and innovators to find solutions to those challenges, Water Research Council (WRC) innovation and impact group executive Mandla Msibi said on Wednesday. Speaking at the Youth and Water Entrepreneurship conference, in Gauteng, he noted that water solutions developed by innovators was on the rise and stressed the importance of development institutions investing in these individuals to provide a platform to resolve South Africa's water and sanitation challenges.

WRC CEO Dhesigen Naidoo pointed out that water security was among the greatest risks to the global economy and that innovation would lead the way in helping alleviate the economic stress experienced as a result of insufficient water supply.

He stated that, on average, South Africans each consumed 235 ℓ/d of water, significantly higher than the global average of 177 ℓ/d, and that it was important to find innovative means to facilitate a decrease in water consumption. Naidoo also said that science, technology and innovation developments were vital in addressing the triple challenges of poverty, unemployment and inequality.

He highlighted that the WRC was partnering with other government institutions such as the Department of Science and Technology (DST) and the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) to help entrepreneurs develop water-focused science and technology solutions to tackle these challenges. Through entrepreneurial support it would be possible to help the South African youth create self-employment and would also play a pivotal role in the development of small, medium-sized and microenterprises, which would also be a major employer for local youth.

DST environmental services and technologies director Henry Roman echoed Naidoo's sentiments and stated that the DST, together with the DWS and WRC, were committed to reaching grass roots developers to achieve the national unemployment alleviation goals. Roman noted that about R7-billion a year was lost to water leakages and that 15 000 plumbers were needed to fix leakages in the national water supply network. Further, he highlighted the important role of information and communication technology (ICT) in developing solutions to better monitor water consumption. ICT solutions would also provide the data necessary to analyse consumption trends and

more efficiently find and resolve leaks in South Africa's water network.

Source: *Engineering News*, 22 June 2016

The **Municipal Assistant™** was developed as an operational information system to assist with the assessment (on component level including cost and lifespan), operations, maintenance (preventive and reactive) and management of water and wastewater facilities and related infrastructure.

The screenshot displays the 'Municipal Assistant' software interface. The top section shows the 'Asset Inventory' for 'Belville WWTW - Clarifier'. It lists various assets such as 'Clarifier Centre silt', 'Clarifier Electrical drive Bearing', 'Clarifier Electrical drive Drive', 'Clarifier Electrical drive Gearbox', 'Clarifier Electrical drive Motor', 'Clarifier Electrical drive Wheel', 'Clarifier Emergency switch', 'Clarifier Inlet box', 'Clarifier Inlet line', 'Clarifier Inlet ring', 'Clarifier Inlet scraper', 'Clarifier Inlet bridge', 'Clarifier Inlet box', and 'Clarifier Inlet structure'. The bottom section shows the 'Cost & Life-span Reports' for the same asset, including a table of 'Inventory items' with columns for 'Inventory No.', 'Description', 'Location', 'Date purchased', 'Costs (Purchased)', 'Costs (Replacement - new)', 'Life span (Years)', 'Remaining life', 'Price Index', 'Year', and 'Month'. A 'LEGEND' is provided for the 'Life span (Years)' column, showing color-coded ranges: < 15 (blue), < 25 (green), < 35 (yellow), < 45 (orange), < 55 (red), and > 55 (dark red).

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