



water & forestry

Department:
Water Affairs & Forestry
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

National Water Services Benchmarking Initiative

Promoting Best Practice

Benchmarking Outcomes for 2005/2006

May 2007

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Preface

Challenges facing municipalities

The South African water sector faces four key challenges in the short and medium term:

1. to increase affordable access to water supply and sanitation services;
2. to ensure that the services provided are sustainable;
3. to develop the necessary capacity to meet the above two challenges; and
4. to improve performance so as to meet the above challenges in the most effective and efficient way.

The role of benchmarking

Benchmarking will play an important role in helping the sector to assess to what extent water services providers are meeting these challenges and, in particular, to what extent sector performance is improving over time. More significantly, benchmarking will help to identify best practices from which others can learn as well as areas most needing improvement.

A national initiative

The National Benchmarking Initiative is a joint initiative of the South African Local Government Association (SALGA), the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry (DWAF) and the Water Research Council (WRC). The goal is to promote improved performance of water services by all water services providers in South Africa. The initiative undertakes annual benchmarking of key performance indicators for the provision of water services in participating municipalities. This process involves site visits and quality control (of data) to ensure consistency and reliability. Outcomes are presented at an annual benchmarking conference to highlight achievements and best practices and to direct learning efforts to areas where improvements can be achieved. DWAF has provided initial seed funding for the initiative. Ethekewini Municipality is the implementing agent. Palmer Development Group in association with Africon and EarthTech (Canada) are the service providers.

Ensuring success

The initiative aims to develop a sustainable benchmarking process which benefits participants and caters to their needs. The following principles inform the implementation of the initiative so as to ensure success:

1. **Ownership of the process by senior water managers.** The senior water managers must believe in the usefulness of the benchmarking programme, fully support the process and *be directly involved*.
2. **Peer review.** Peer review of benchmarking outcomes is a powerful mechanism not only to communicate the outcomes but also to ensure active participation in the process.
3. **Moving from knowledge to changes in practice.** If benchmarking does not lead to improvements in performance, then the benefits of the system are questionable. Linking this programme to changes in practice implies significant involvement of senior water managers in the benchmarking process. In addition, learning and change is more likely where water managers interact on a regular basis and share common concerns.
4. **Incremental and selective rather than comprehensive.** Ambitious benchmarking schemes have floundered due to a poor benefit-to-effort relationship. For this reason, the programme will focus on a few well-selected indicators.
5. **Clear definitions.** Adequate attention will be given to ensure clear, precise and consistently interpreted definitions.

6. **Assessment of reliability.** The source of data and its reliability must be well understood when measuring performance.
7. **Quality assurance and audits.** The process of collecting, entering and checking data needs to be based on sound quality assurance practices.
8. **Software.** The software used needs to be both flexible and user friendly.
9. **Sustainability.** Payment for the benchmarking service by the beneficiaries of the service is a clear indication of the value derived and of commitment to the process. The sustainability of the benchmarking system will only be guaranteed if the initiative is funded by the water services authorities themselves in due course.
10. **Professional expertise and experience.** A sound benchmarking system is dependent on sound professional expertise on the part of the service provider undertaking the data collection and data analysis.
11. **Responsive to user needs.** The process needs to respond to and meet the needs of the water services managers.

Acronyms

DM	District Municipality
DPLG	Department of Provincial and Local Government
DWAF	Department of Water Affairs and Forestry
DWQF	Drinking Water Quality Framework
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
LM	Local Municipality
Metro	Metropolitan Municipality
MFMA	Municipal Finance Management Act
MIG	Municipal Infrastructure Grant
PFMA	Public Finance Management Act
SAAWU	South African Association of Water Utilities
SABS	South African Bureau of Standards
SALGA	South African Local Government Association
SANS	South African National Standards
WSA	Water Services Authority
WSP	Water Services Provider
WSDP	Water Services Development Plan

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1 Introduction

1.1 Benchmarking in context

The Strategic Framework for Water Services (2003) set out the vision for the water services sector. It is this vision – the goal of effective, efficient and sustainable provision of water services – that benchmarking seeks to promote:

Sector vision: Water is life, sanitation is dignity

All people living in South Africa have access to adequate, safe, appropriate and affordable water and sanitation services, use water wisely and practise safe sanitation.

Water supply and sanitation services are provided by effective, efficient and sustainable institutions that are accountable and responsive to those whom they serve. Water services institutions reflect the cultural, gender and racial diversity in South Africa.

Water is used effectively, efficiently and sustainably in order to reduce poverty, improve human health and promote economic development. Water and wastewater are managed in an environmentally responsible and sustainable manner.

Strategic Framework for Water Services, 2003

Benchmarking also supports a key element of the National Water Services Regulation Strategy, namely to understand sector performance.

1.2 The choice of indicators

The draft National Water Services Regulation Strategy states the following:

The Water Services Act sets out a comprehensive set of measures to be monitored in terms of water services authorities' water services functions. These are amplified in the relevant technical regulations published under that Act. In addition to these, both National Treasury and DPLG have reporting requirements related to the performance of water services. In total these constitute a somewhat overwhelming set of reporting requirements and there is limited capacity in water services institutions to measure and report on these (and in national government to meaningfully monitor all of them).

For this reason, the Strategic Framework elevated a limited set of key performance indicators for priority attention. Other elements of performance may be monitored, but priority and strategic attention will be given by the regulator to these nine key performance indicators. These priority indicators are listed in the text box below.

Performance indicators contained in the Strategic Framework:

1. Access to basic water supply
2. Access to basic sanitation supply
3. Quality of services: Potable water quality
4. Quality of services: Continuity of supply
5. Access to free basic services (water)
6. Access to free basic services (sanitation)
7. Financial performance: Affordability and debtor management
8. Asset management: Metering coverage and unaccounted-for water
9. Protection of the environment: Effluent discharge quality

The benchmarking indicators measured in the National Benchmarking Initiative are based on this core set, as elaborated in the draft National Regulation Strategy.

1.3 An annual report on sector performance

An annual report on sector performance will be published by DWAF. This report, on the benchmarking process and results, is a contribution to this more comprehensive sector performance report.

1.4 Caution when interpreting the data

At this point in the benchmarking project cycle, it is to be expected that much of the data provided are estimates. Consequently care should be taken when looking at the data for each specific municipality, as this data could, on its own, be misleading. The preferred method of interpreting this data, at present, is to view the overall patterns and trends in each data set. This is a more reliable way of interpreting the current data set. Over time, the data will improve and it will be possible to interrogate each municipality's performance in detail. See section 3.7.

2 The benchmarking process

The overall benchmarking process, together with some key dates, is presented in Figure 1.

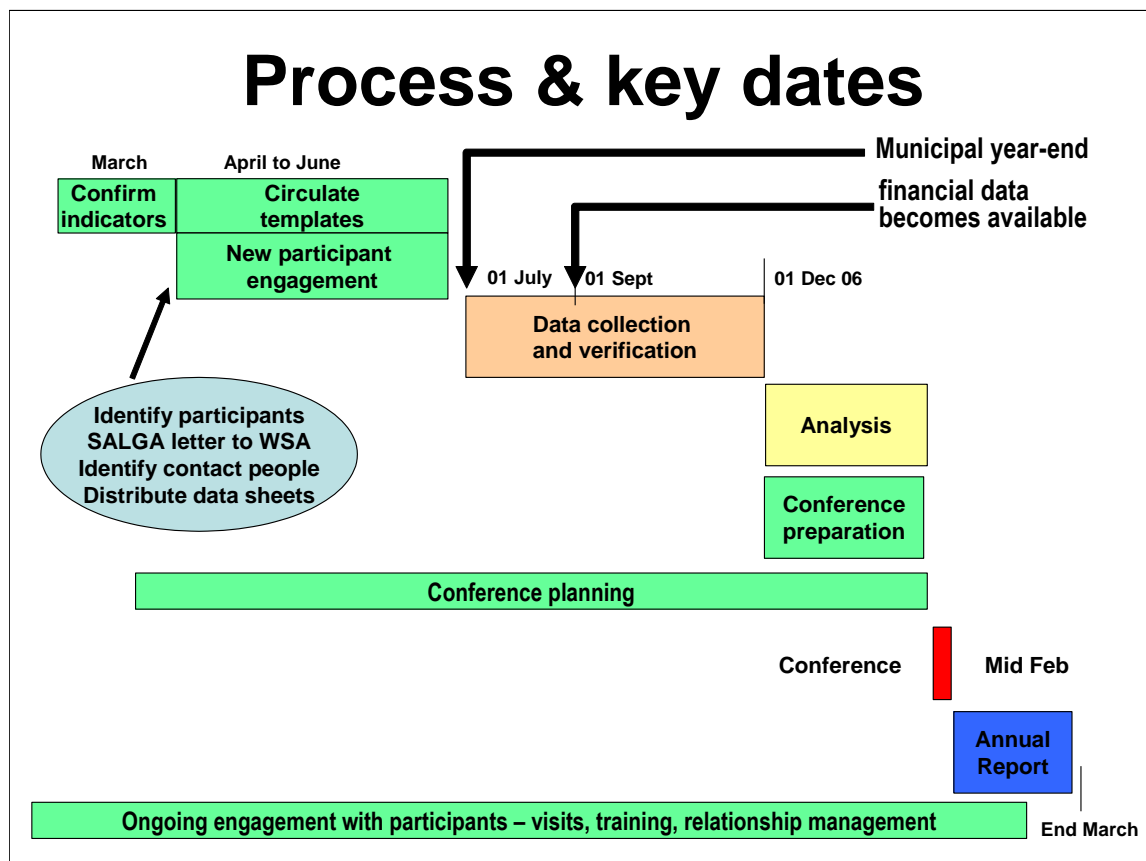


Figure 1: Process and key dates

It is intended that the National Benchmarking Initiative be managed in terms of this annual cycle. The cycle is based on the municipal financial year ending on 30 June and allows for a period of six months after the financial year-end for water services authorities to complete their financial statements and to collate and calculate their performance data (with support from the service provider), and for this to be collected and verified by the service provider.

Each of the steps are described below:

1. **Confirmation of indicators:** The intention is to keep the indicators as stable as possible to limit them to an essential core set. (March and April.)
2. **Circulation of templates:** An induction pack (for new participants), and the data templates (for both existing and new participant) are circulated. (April to June.)
3. **New participant engagement:** SALGA invites new participants. (April to June.)
4. **Data collation and verification:** After the end of the Financial Year (June), municipalities collate and verify all of their performance data (with support from the service provider). (July to November.)
5. **Analysis.** Analysis takes place in the period December and January.
6. **Conference preparation.** Intensive activities related to the conference take place in the two months running up to the conference.
7. **Conference planning.** This is an ongoing activity as many arrangements need to be made well in advance and decisions pertaining to these take time.
8. **Conference.** It is the intention to hold the conference in mid-February. The conference is 2 or 3 days in length depending on the programme agreed by the steering committee comprising DWAF, SALGA and WRC.
9. **Annual benchmarking report.** The report is produced after the conference, taking into account the feedback from the conference. The aim is to have a final draft available at the end of March and for this to be circulated to municipalities as soon after this as practical.
10. **Ongoing engagement with municipalities.** The service provide will aim to ensure ongoing contact with participating municipalities (as well as prospective participants) to support municipalities in their tasks of measuring and recording the performance related to the chosen benchmarking indicators.

3 Progress to date

3.1 The second round

This document is reporting on the second round of the National Benchmarking Initiative. Results for the first round (2004/5 outcomes) are reported in SALGA *et al* (2006).

3.2 Number of participants

In the first round (for 2004/05) 40 participants were identified and 22 responded. In the second round (for 2005/06) 70 participants were identified and 48 responded. This represents an increase in the response rate from 55 % to 68 %.

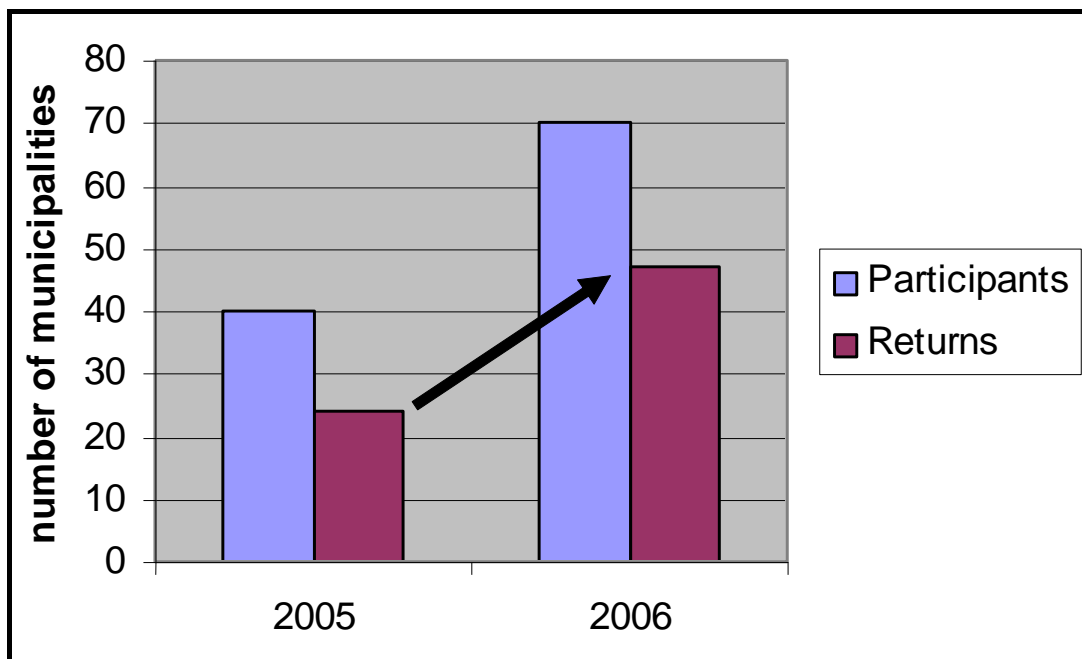


Figure 2: Participation for each round

The participation in 2005/6 for Metros, DMs and LMs is shown in Figure 3 below. The participation rates (identified participants versus those who were able to provide information) for Metros was 100%, for DMs 75% and for LMs 56%. The higher participation rates in the Metros and DMs possibly can be attributed to the active peer networks operating for these water services authorities.

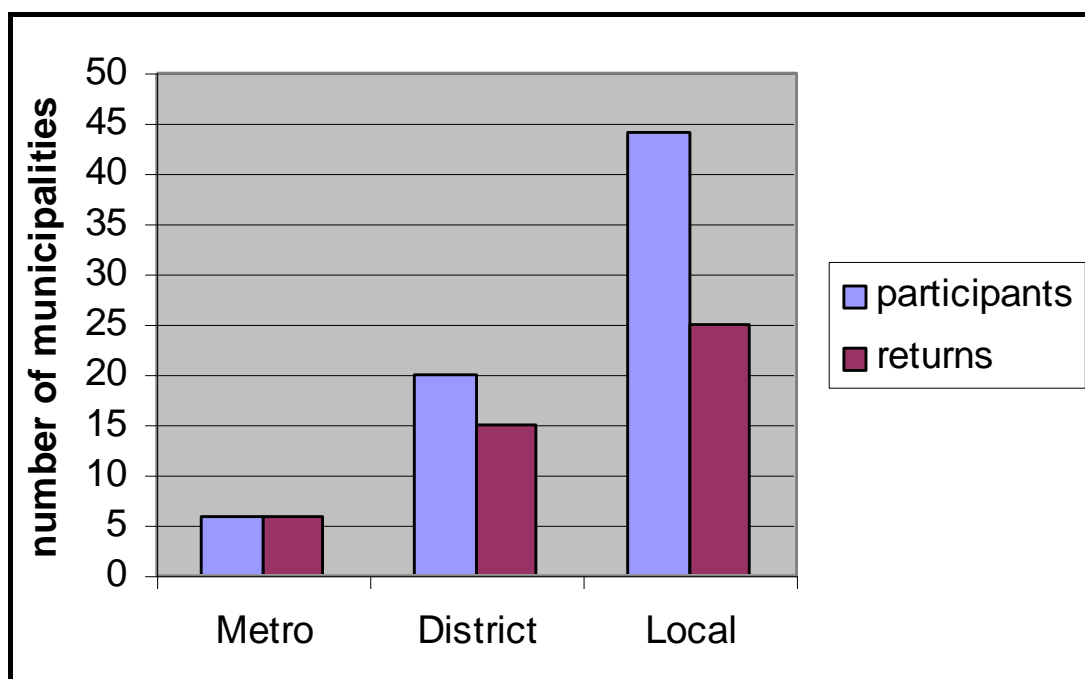


Figure 3: Participation rate for Metros, DMs and LMs

3.3 Number of data fields

The number of data fields increased by more than 4 fold from first round in 2005 to the second round in 2006. This was as a result of the greater number of participants and well as the request for additional context data. There were also a few additional indicators requested.

3.4 Participating municipalities

Responsibility

SALGA has the primary responsibility to identify potential participants and to engage with them to obtain their willingness to participate in the benchmarking process.

Follow through

Seventy four municipalities were identified by SALGA and accepted by the National Benchmarking Initiative steering committee. Of the 70 municipalities identified and approached to participate in the National Benchmarking Study 48 responded positively (that is, returned data). The 48 are listed in Table 1 below. A geographical representation of the participating is shown in

Figure 4 below.

Table 1: Municipalities that participated in the benchmarking initiative

<i>Metropolitan Municipalities</i>	<i>District Municipalities</i>	<i>Local Municipalities</i>
City of Cape Town	Alfred Nzo	Baviaans
City of Joburg	Amatole	Beaufort West
Ekurhuleni	Bophirima	Buffalo City
eThekweni	Capricorn	Cape Agulhas
Nelson Mandela	Central	Dipaleseng
Tshwane	Chris Hani	Emalahleni
	Frances Baard	Gamagara
	Greater Sekhukhune	Ga-Segonyana
	Sisonke	Ikwezi
	Ugu District	Kgatelopele
	Ukhahlamba	Knysna
	uMgungundlovu	Lephalale
	Uthukela	Manguang
	Uthungulu	Merafong City
	Vhembe	Modimolle
		Mogalakwena
		Mogale City
		Moretele
		Moses Kotane
		Msunduzi
		Newcastle
		Polokwane
		Potchefstroom
		Siyathemba
		Theewaterskloof
		Thembelihle
		Theewaterskloof

**Metropolitan
Municipalities**

District Municipalities

Local Municipalities

Thembelihe

3.5 Coverage

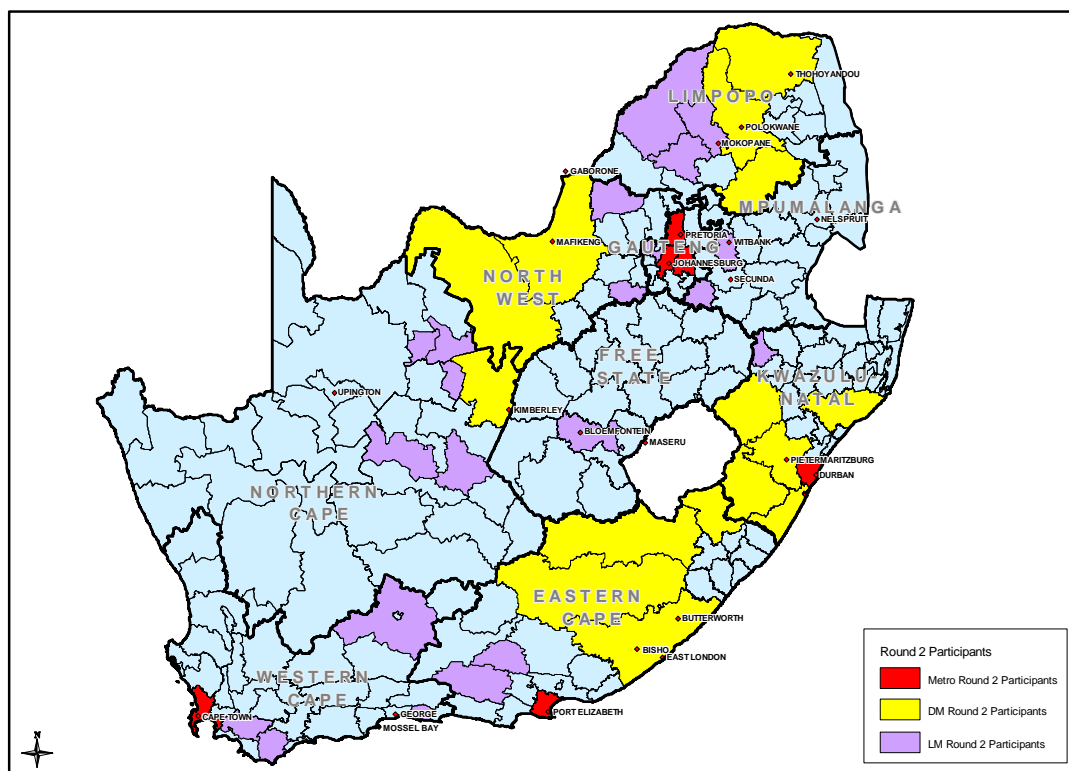


Figure 4: Geographical representation of participation

The figure above provides a geographical representation of the coverage of this benchmarking exercise.

The WSA's that participated in this study account for a population of 38.36 million, in terms of data sourced from Census 2001. Against a total national population of 44.74 million in 2001, this benchmarking study thus covers 86% of the population of the country as it was in 2001. Given the rate of urbanisation and migration since 2001, this coverage is likely to be higher in terms of the current population dynamics.

3.6 Level of confidence in the performance indicators

Each performance indicator (or grouping of like indicators) was coupled to one of the following "level of confidence" indicators:

0. Not stated,
1. Estimate,
2. Reliable information, or
3. Audited information.

Using a numerical equivalent for each level (as indicated above), the average level of confidence of the data received for the Metros, DMs and LMs are shown in Figure 5, Figure 6 and Figure 7 respectively.

There is great variability between water services authorities with respect to the level of confidence of the data supplied.

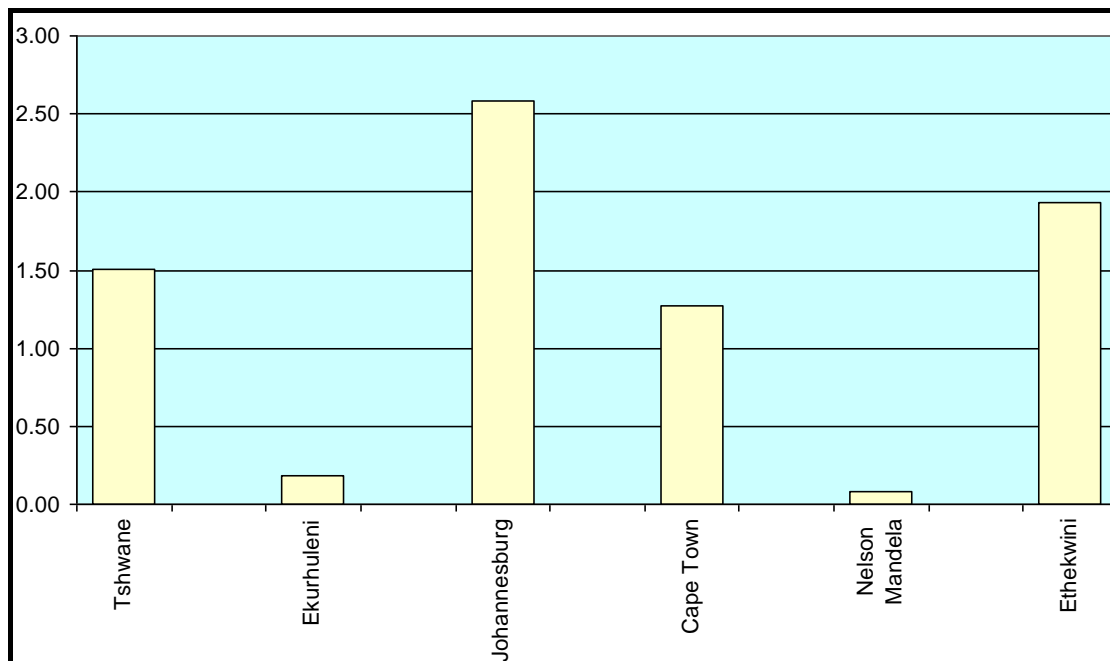


Figure 5: Average data confidence on the Metros

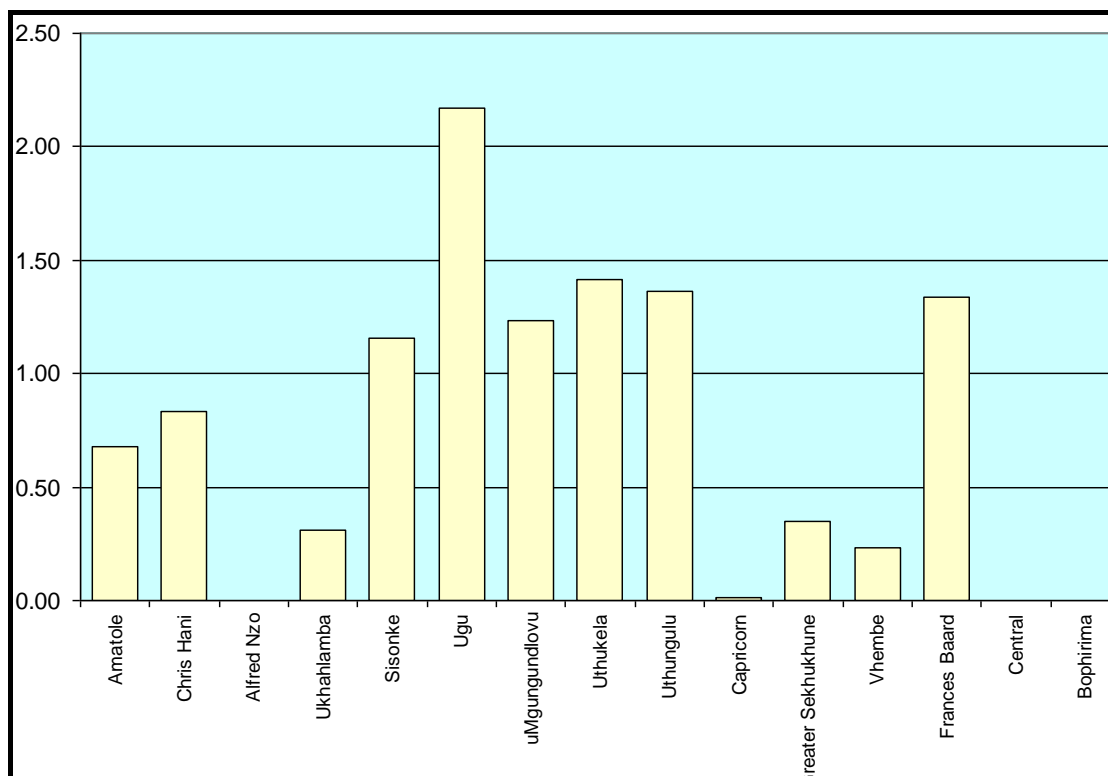


Figure 6: Average data confidence in the DMs

A breakdown of the data collected is given in Table 2. The Metros were not only able to provide the data required but were able to do so over a longer time period. This is clearly a consequence of having more capacity than the LMs and DMs.

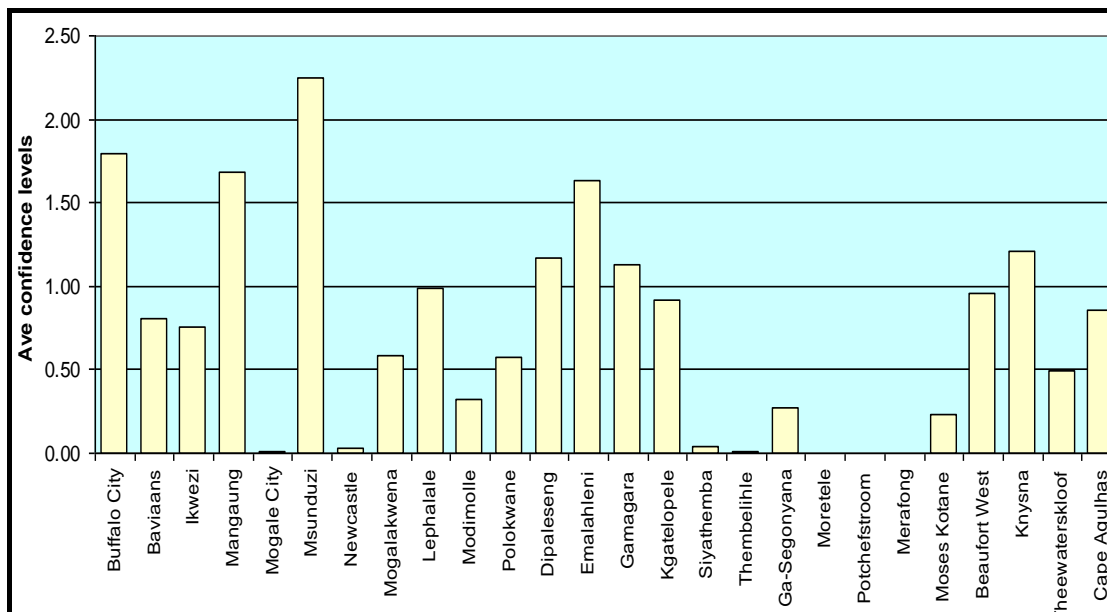


Figure 7: Average data confidence in the LMs

3.7 Ability to provide information

The ability to provide the information requested varied between water services authority type as shown below.

Table 2: Statistics of data collected

Category	Data elements collected	Percentage
Metro	369	80
DM	718	62
LM	1394	70
Totals	2841	69

It is anticipated that performance in this respect will improve over time.

3.8 Evaluating our progress

We are only in year two of the national benchmarking initiative. It is important to appreciate that initially, a lot of effort must be placed on the definition of indicators, and the collation and verification of data. In time, more attention can be placed on refinement, internal review of data (interpretation of what the data means for performance and management) and continuous improvement initiatives.

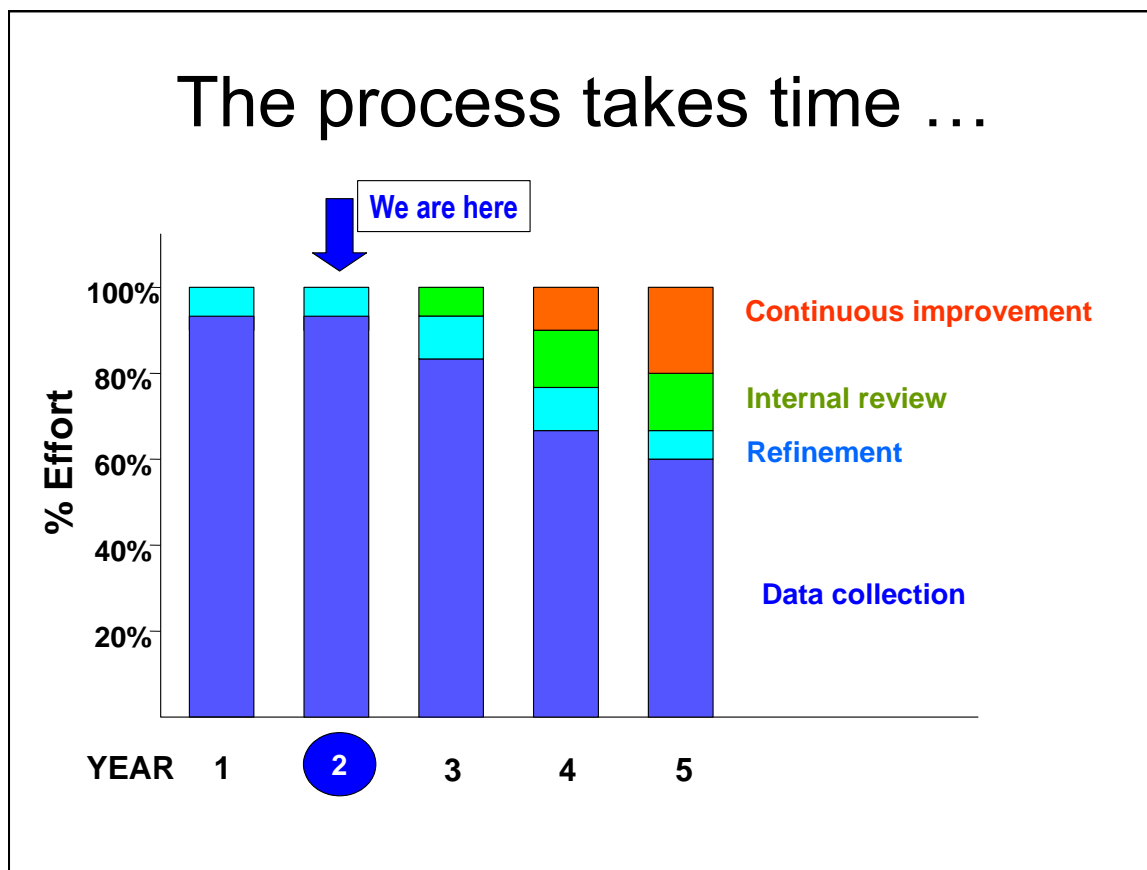


Figure 8: Benchmarking programmes follow a natural rhythm (source: Canadian initiative)

Within this context, good progress has been made in the benchmarking initiative to date. It has been a considerable achievement to get the participation of so many municipalities in such a short period of time. In Canada, for example, the number of participating municipalities is 35, representing about 60% of Canada’s population. (The benchmarking initiative has been going for a number of years).

4 Context

4.1 Introduction

Some contextual data (pertaining to demographics, scale of operations, capital spending and revenue) is presented in this section to set the scene for the performance indicators which are given in the following sections.

The data is presented separately for the Metropolitan Municipalities (Metros), Districts (DMs) and Local Municipalities (LMs) as the operating environment for these three kinds of water services authority are generally quite different.

As will be shown below, there is a wide disparity in operating environment across local municipalities. In future, when there is a large enough sample, consideration will be given to separating the local municipalities into the following sub-categories:

- B1: Secondary cities: the 21 local municipalities with the largest budgets.
- B2: Local municipalities with a large town as core (29 in total).

B3: Local municipalities with small towns, with relatively small population and significant proportion of urban population but with no large town as core (111 in total).

B4: Local municipalities which are mainly rural with communal tenure and with, at most, one or two small towns in their area (70 in total).

However, B4 municipalities are generally not water service authorities.

4.2 Demographics

4.2.1 Number of households

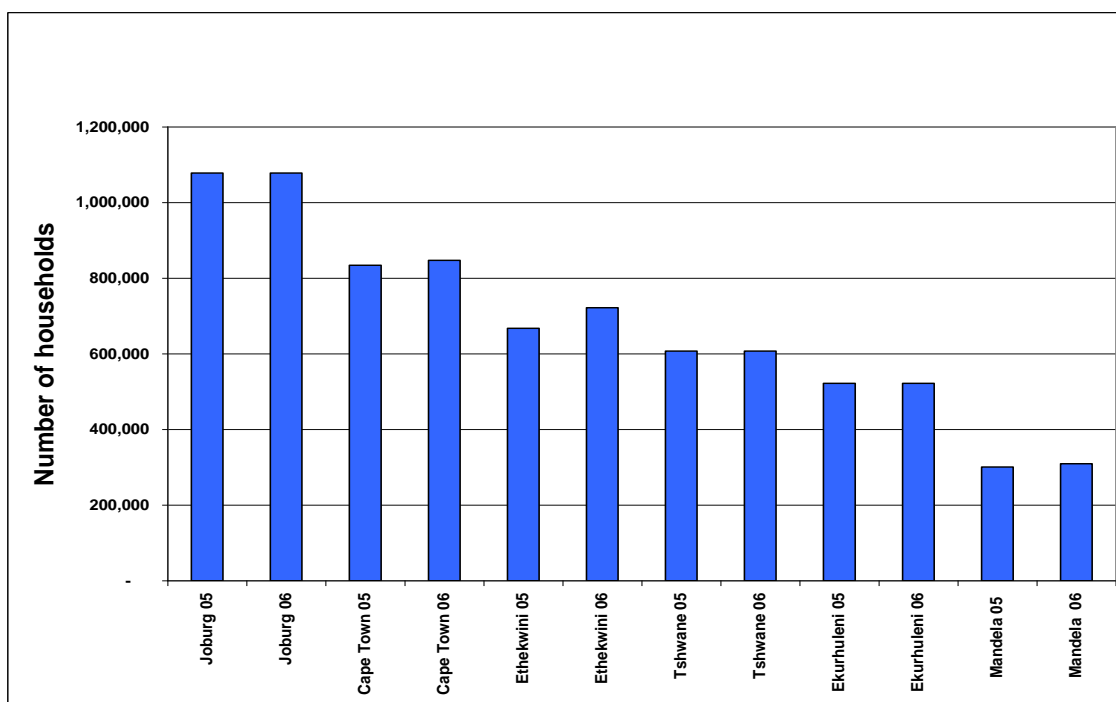


Figure 9: Number of households in the Metros

The number of households served by each of the six Metros ranges from about 300,000 to 1,100,000.

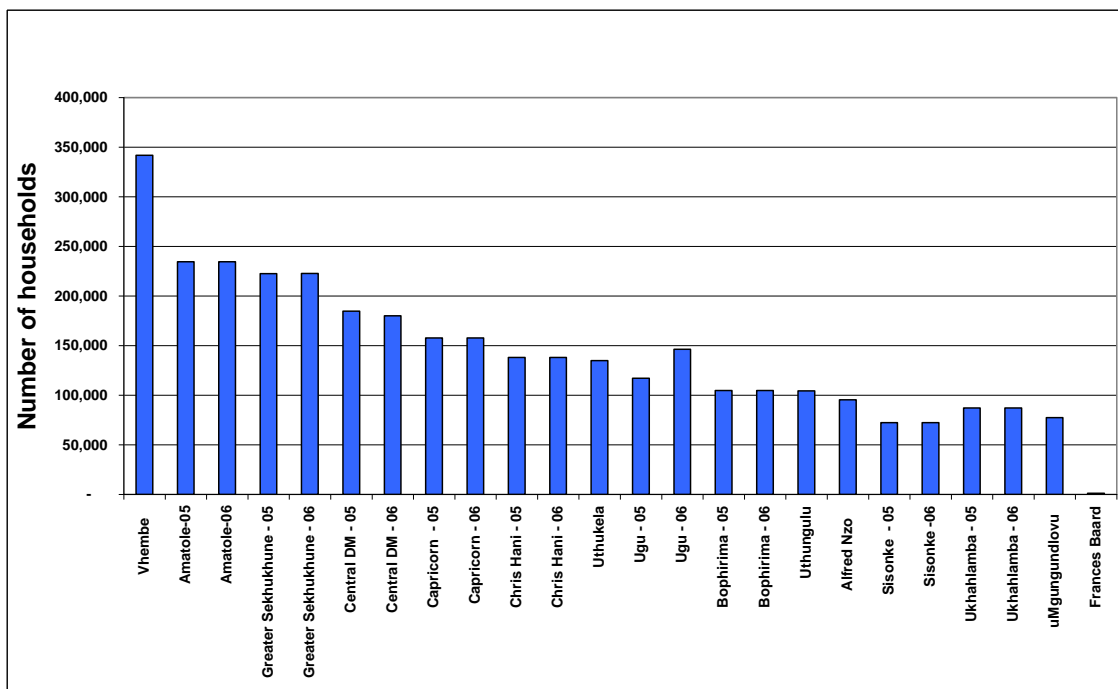


Figure 10: Number of households in the DMs

In contrast to the Metros, the number of households in each of the participating Districts ranges from about 70 000 to about 340 000 households.

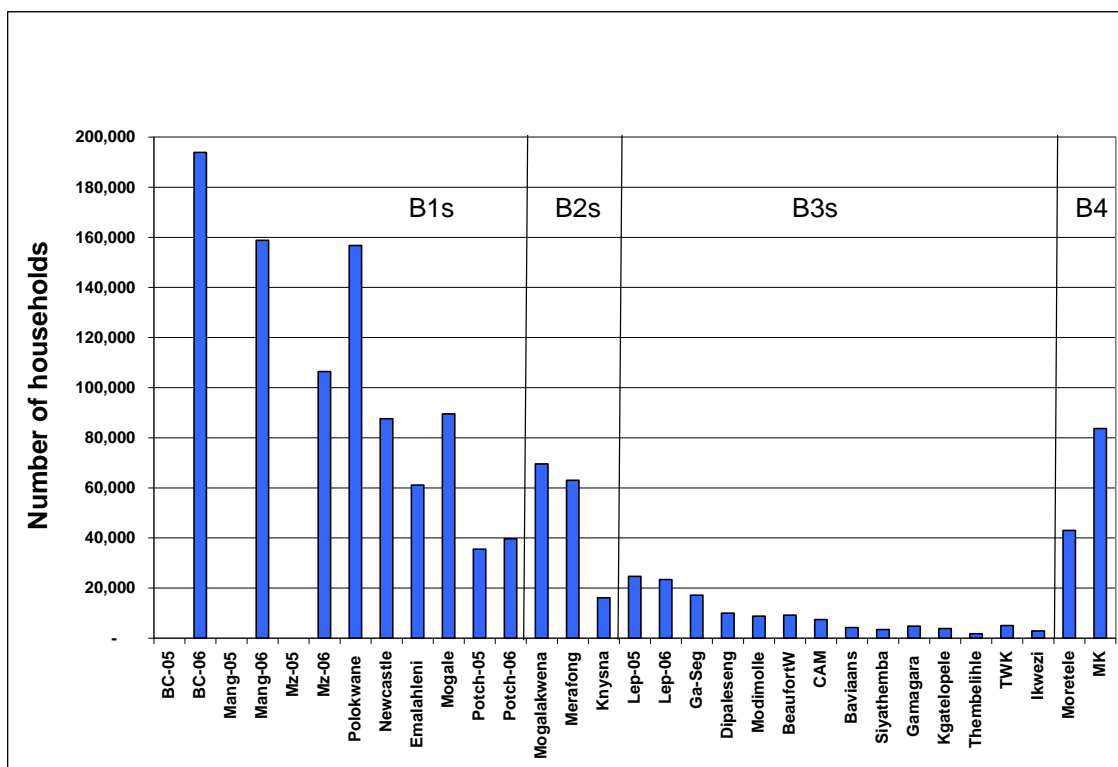


Figure 11: Number of households in the LMs

There is a very wide range in the number of households in each of the participating local municipalities.

4.2.2 Urban-rural split

Based on a study done by the MDB in 2005 a split between urban and rural population numbers is presented for the district and local municipal water services authorities. (The Metros are considered to be close to 100% urban.)

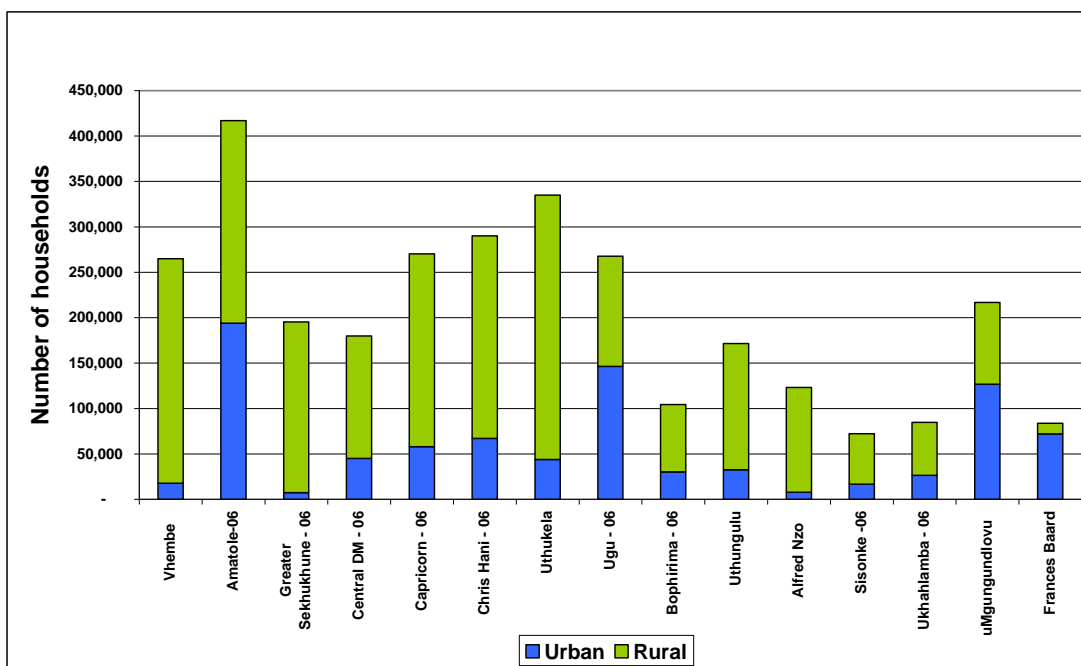


Figure 12: Urban and rural split for the DMs

Most Districts that are WSAs have a significant proportion of their population which is rural. In the case of Amatole and uMgungundlovu, the data shown includes Buffalo City and Msundusi which are themselves WSAs.

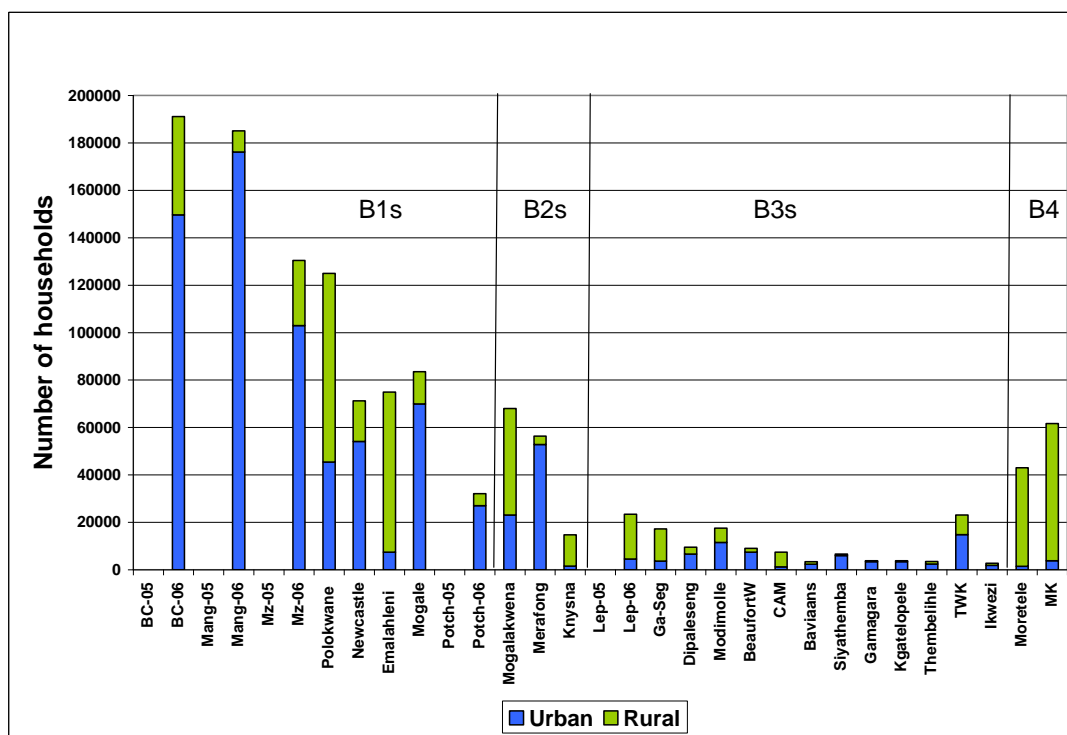


Figure 13: Urban and rural split for the LMs

Most of the local municipalities that are WSAs have a predominantly urban population, with some notable exceptions (Emalaheni, Moses Kotane, Moretelle, and Knysna).

The significance of the urban-rural split for service provision is that rural communities present specific challenges with respect to effective and sustainable service delivery. These challenges include the following:

- The distances between infrastructural elements may be large, which makes transport and other expenses more costly;
- Many rural systems are small distributed stand-alone systems which require a particular approach to operation and maintenance; and
- Many rural schemes provide only a basic level of service with little or no cost recovery.

4.3 Scale of Operations

4.3.1 Water and sewer connections

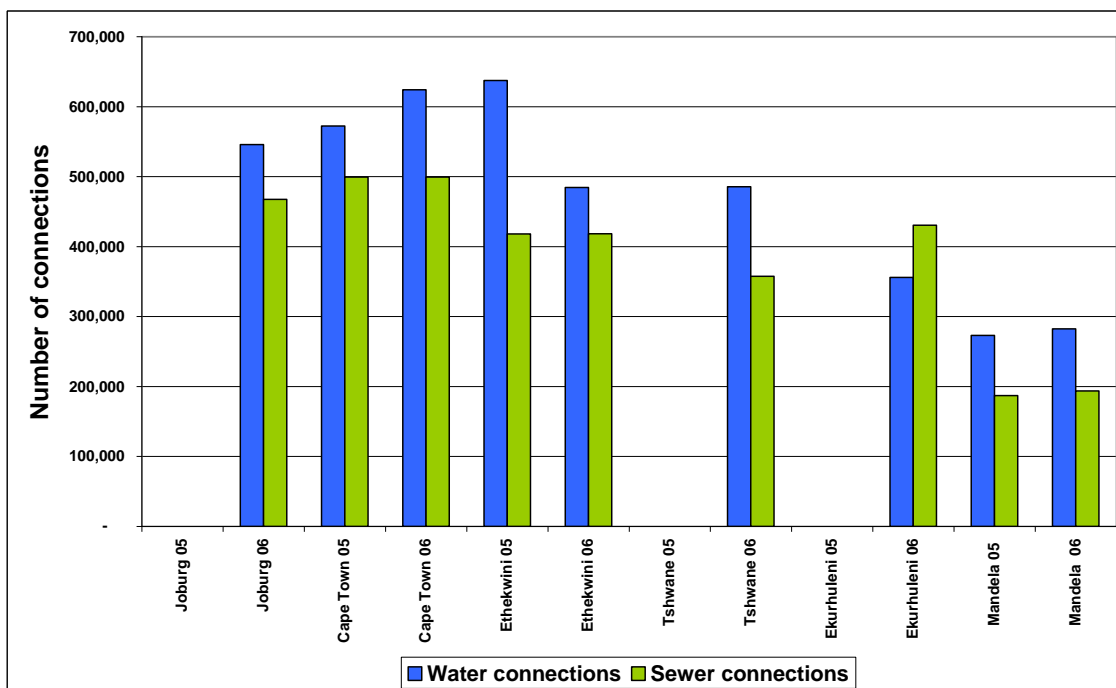


Figure 14: Water and sewer connections for Metros

The metropolitan water services authorities are responsible for operations of a significant size and scale.

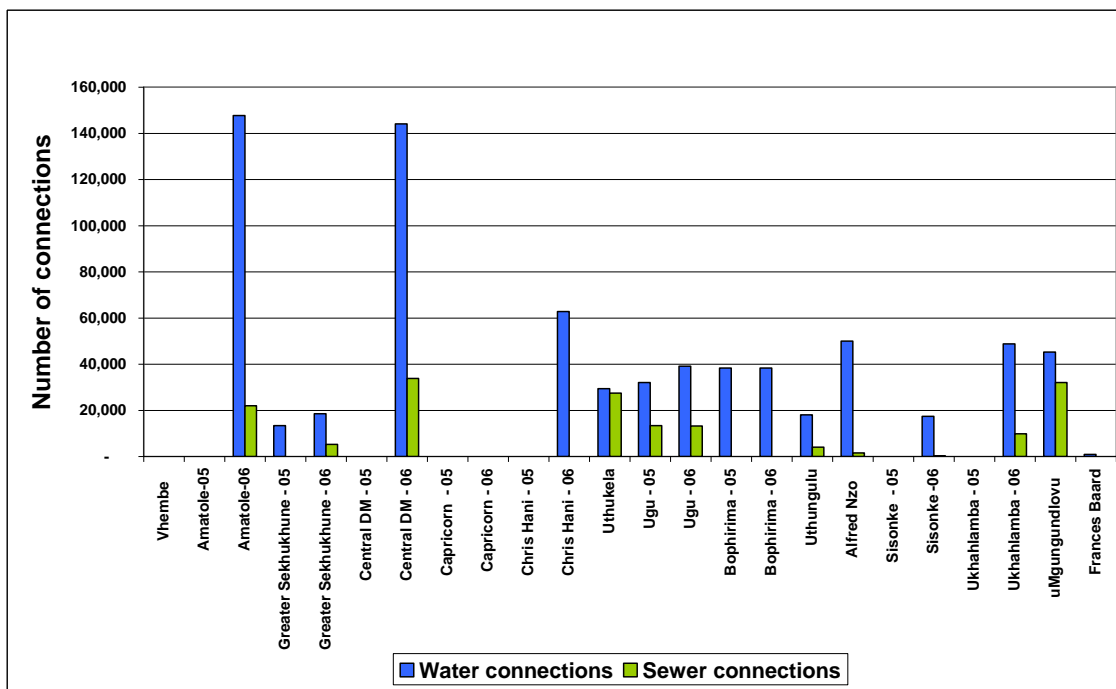


Figure 15: Water and sewer connections for DMs

The total number of water connections in each district is quite significant, although the number of sewer connections is much smaller. It needs to be borne in mind that many of the water connections are likely to be rural connections with the associated challenges as mentioned above.

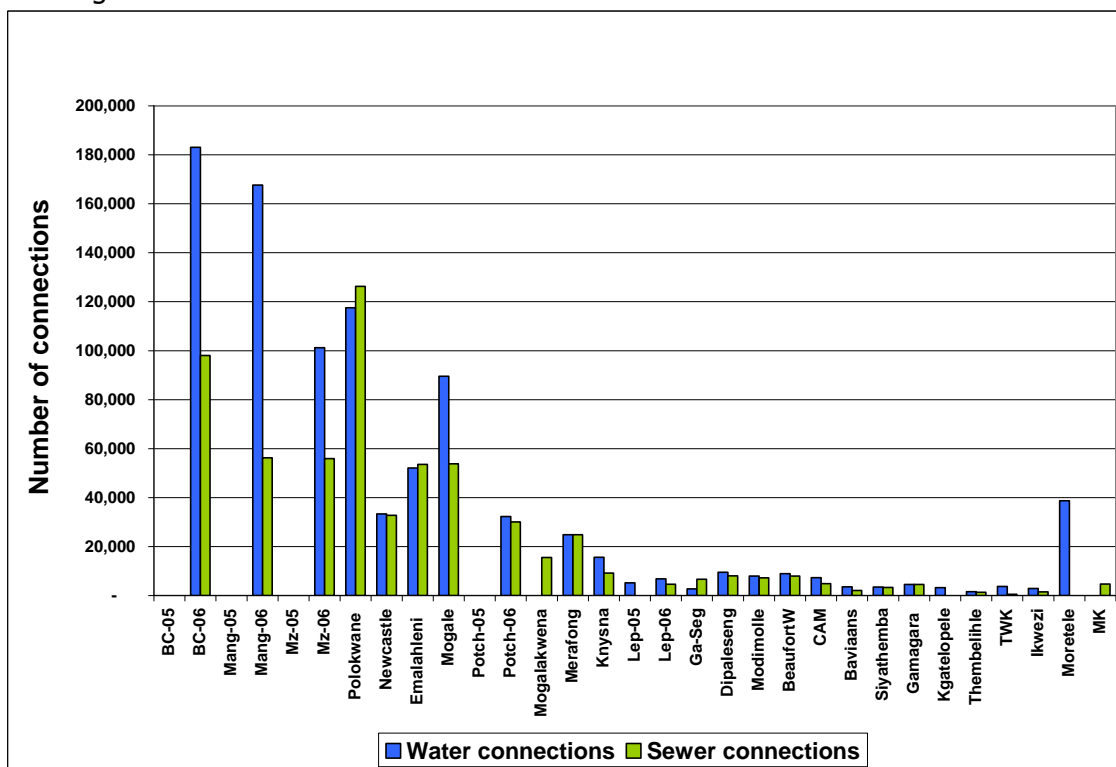


Figure 16: Water and sewer connections for LMs

There is a wide range in the number of water connections for local municipalities. Most of these connections are urban connections. The challenges faced by the large municipalities are likely to be very different to those face by the very small municipalities and this should be borne in mind when comparing the data.

4.3.2 Total staff

Capacity of the state to deliver has never been higher on the transformation agenda. While staffing is only one element of capacity it is an important element to understand. Staffing also provides an indication of the scale of operations in that WSA and is thus important to contextualizing the performance of that WSA.

Unfortunately, the staffing data provided by participants was significantly incomplete. However, some broad patterns are evident from the data that is available (see graphs below).

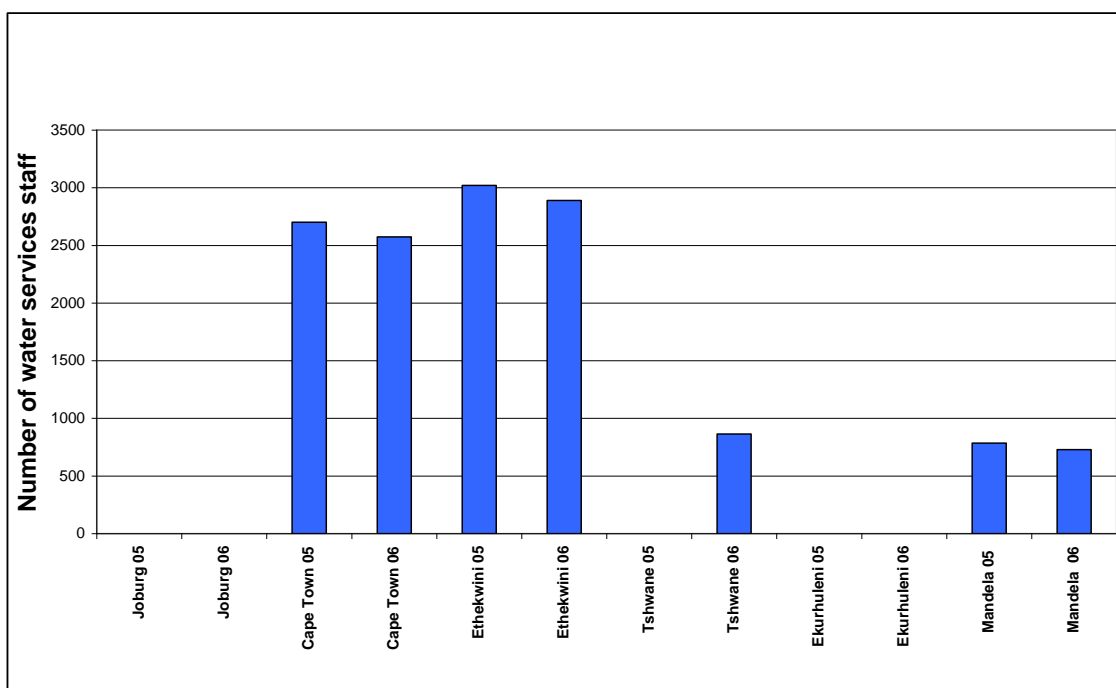


Figure 17: Total staff in the Metros

The staffing in the larger metros is significant. The staffing in Tshwane excludes the external WSPs operating in their area. Nevertheless, it still seems low compared to the others. Nelson Mandela operates at a considerably smaller scale compared to the others.

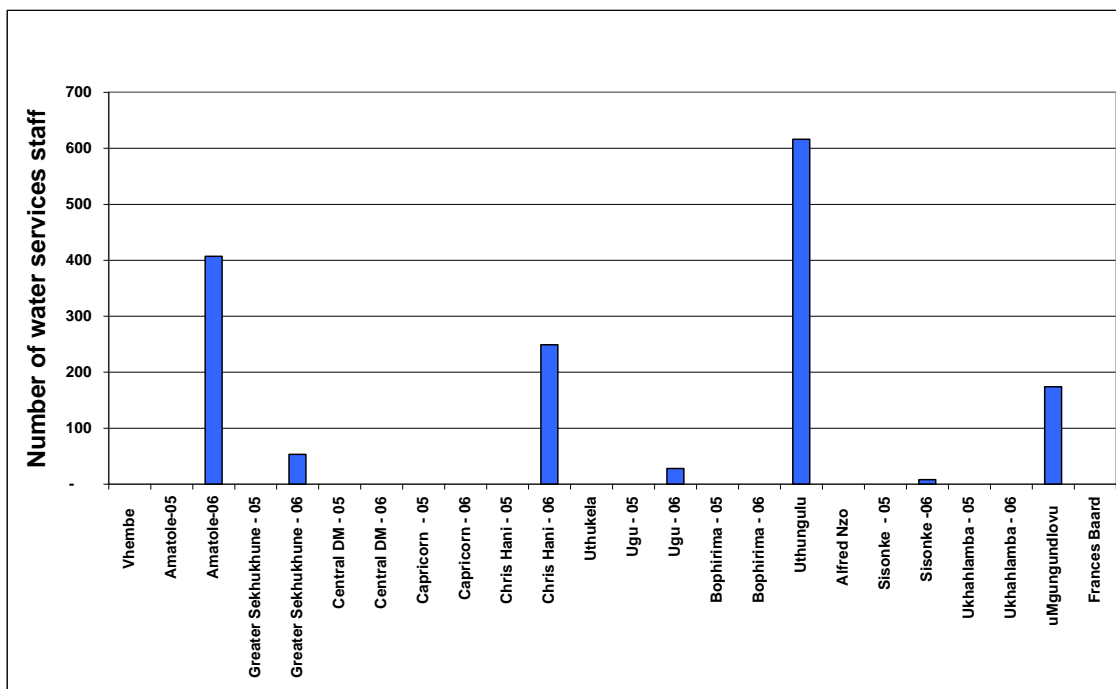


Figure 18: Total staff in DMs

The lack of staffing data for the district WSAs is notable.

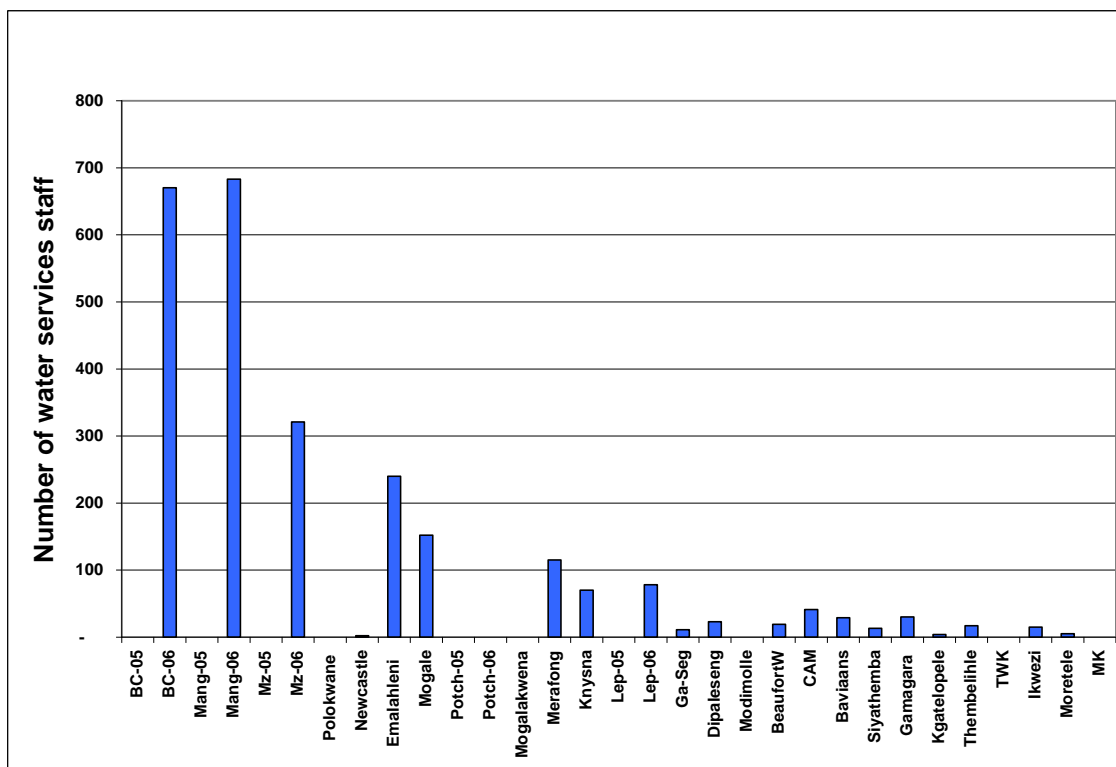


Figure 19: Total staff in LMs

The range in staffing across LMs is anticipated in line with the very wide range in the scale of operations. It is notable that many of the operations are very small with few water services staff (sometimes only a handful).

4.4 Capital Spent

4.4.1 Total capital spent

The capital spending (on water services) and total MIG spending for each participating municipalities is presented below.

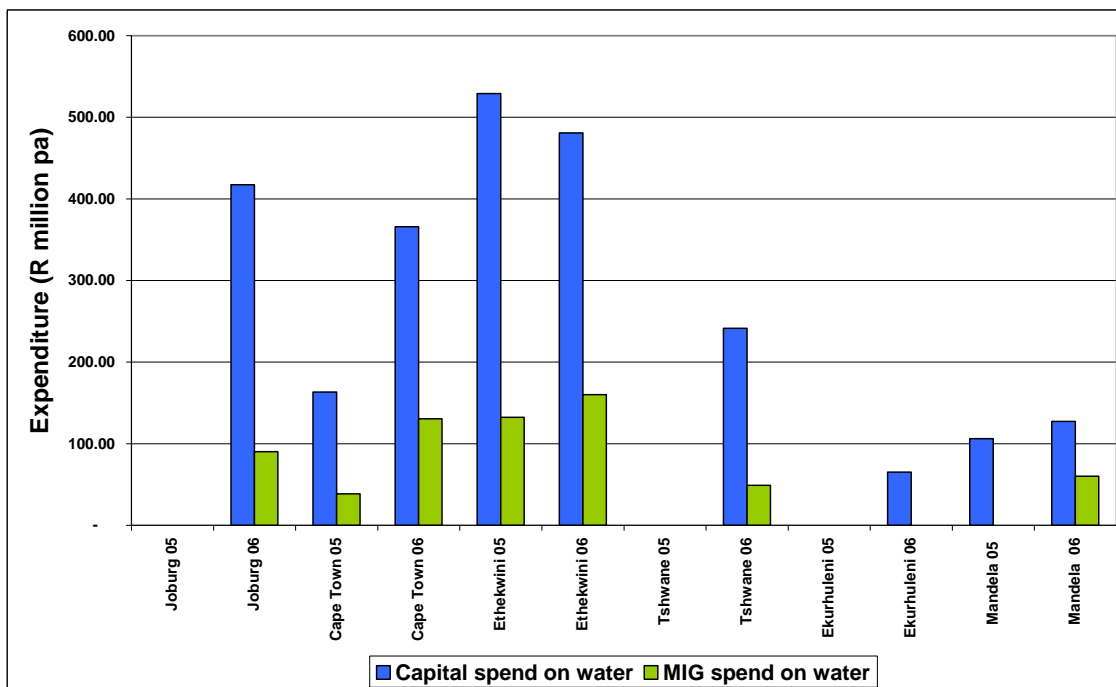


Figure 20: Capital expenditure on water for the Metros

As would be expected, MIG spending on water services is less than total capital spending for the metros.

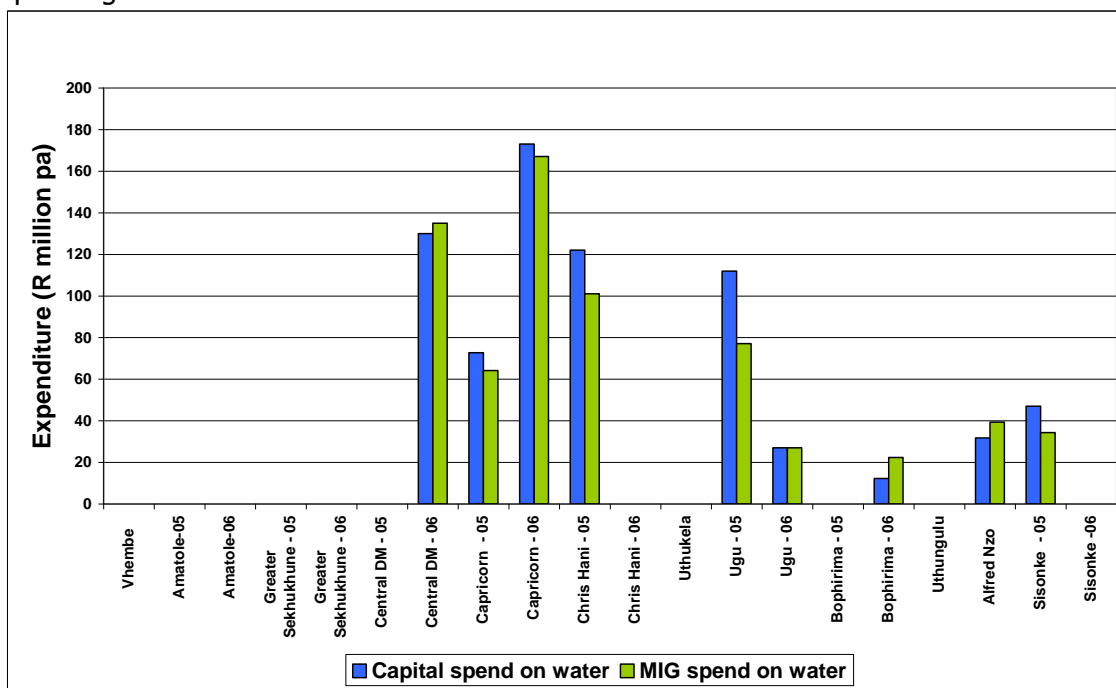


Figure 21: Capital expenditure on water for the DMs

Total capital spending of water services is very similar to the MIG spending on water services in the districts (in other words, most of the capital for water services comes from the MIG grant).

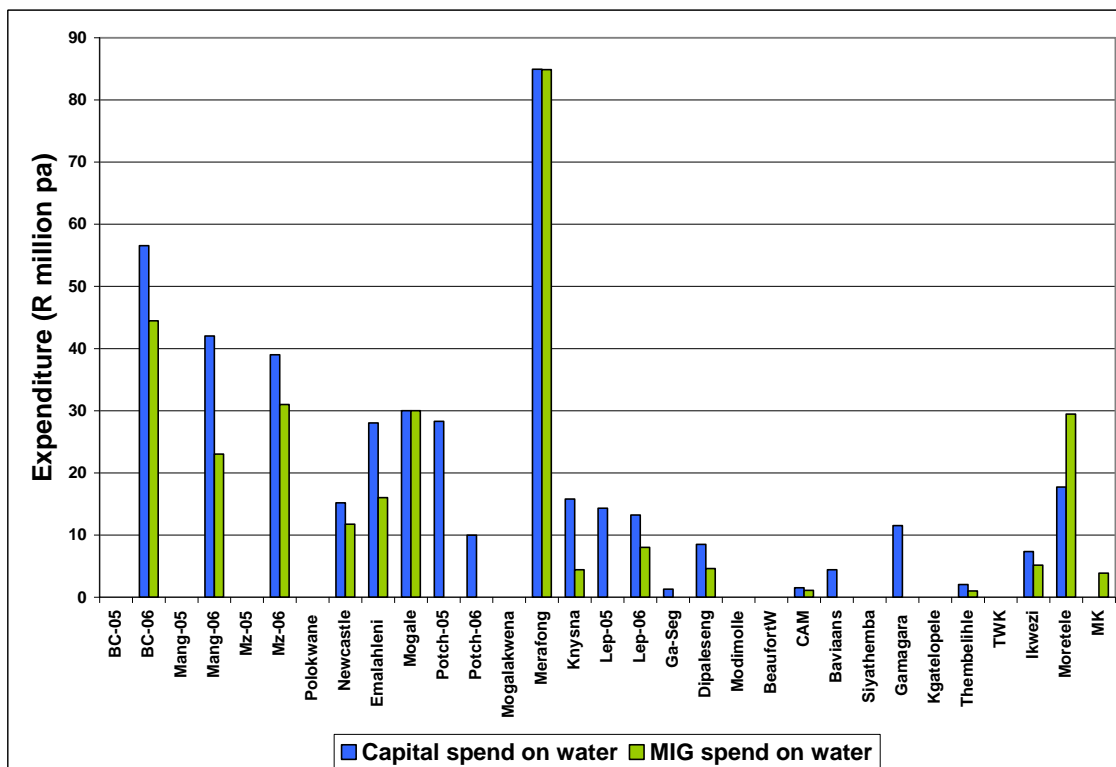


Figure 22: Capital expenditure on water for the LMs

The situation is more varied for the local municipalities. Merafong appears to be an outlier and this data needs to be checked.

4.5 Revenue

4.5.1 Total revenue

Total revenue for water services provides another indicator of scale.

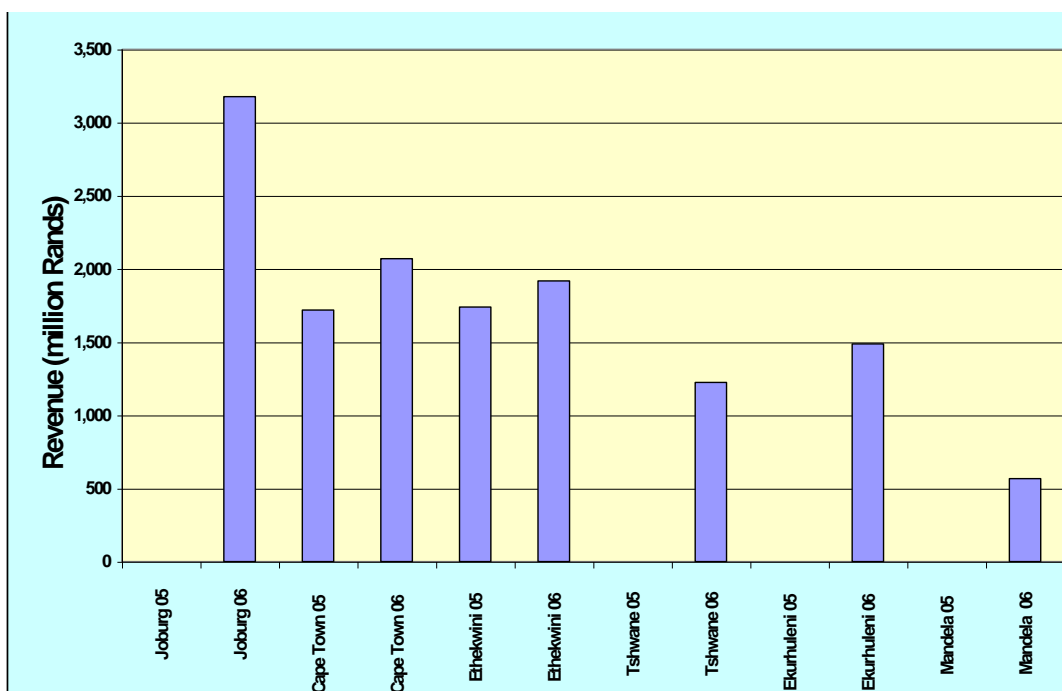


Figure 23: Total revenue for water and sanitation in the Metros

Water is a very significant business in the metro areas, with revenues of the order of R1.5 billion to over R3 billion per annum

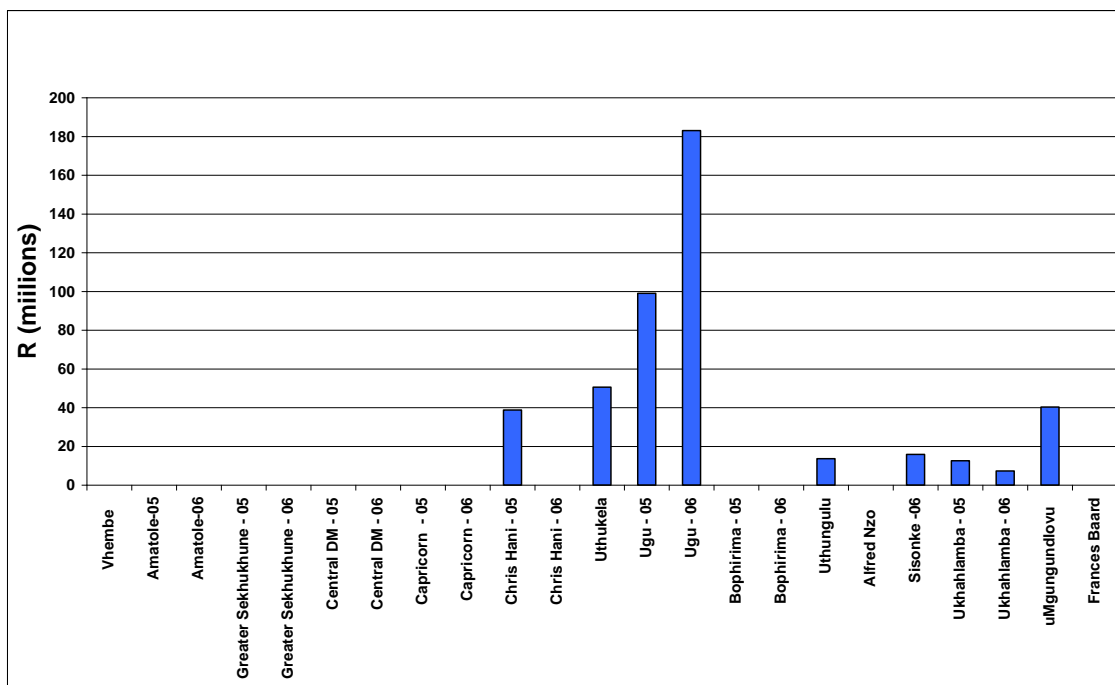


Figure 24: Total revenue for water and sanitation in the DMs

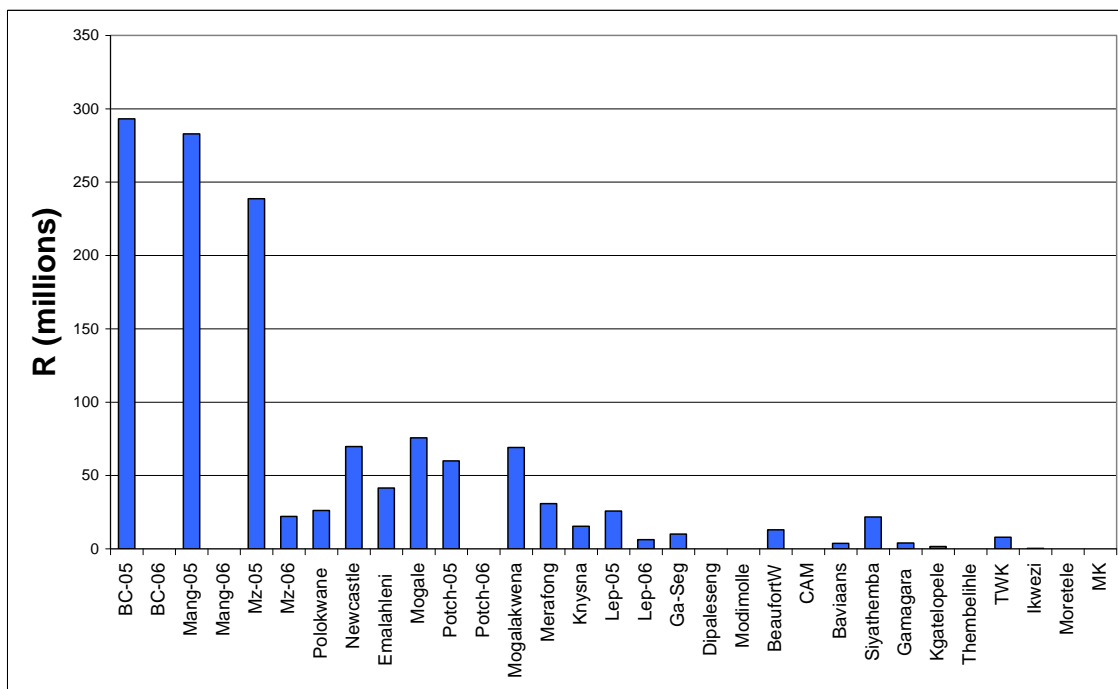


Figure 25: Total revenue for water and sanitation in the LMs

Revenue data for the Districts is not complete. Available data show a wide range in total water services revenues per district.

4.5.2 Revenue per connection per month

Normalizing the revenue with respect to the number of connections allows for

- a more direct comparison between municipalities, and
- an assessment of viability.

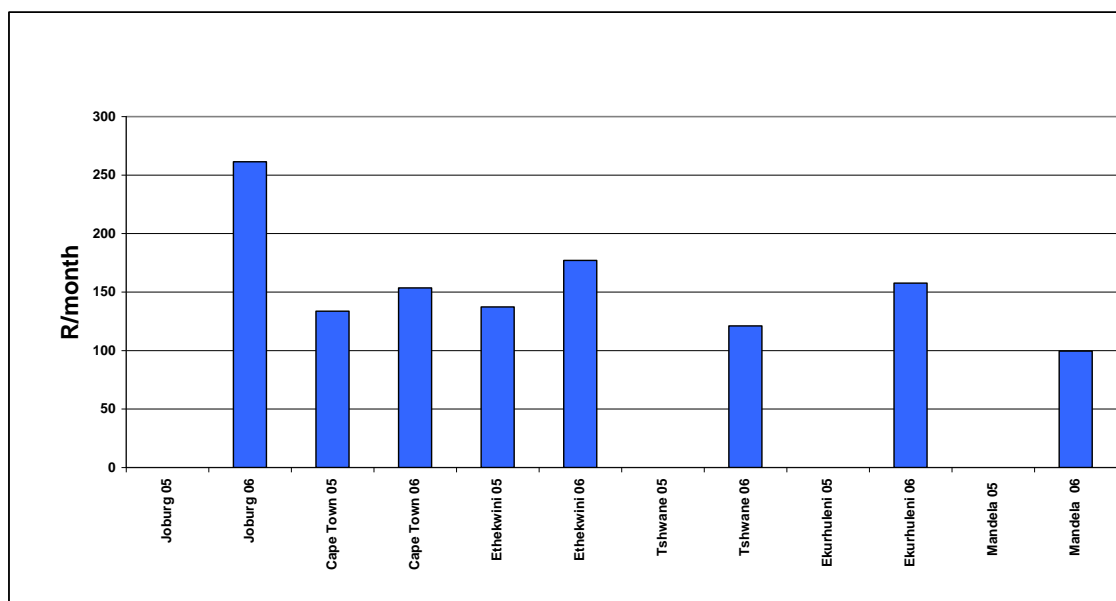


Figure 26: Revenue per connection per month for the Metros

Joburg has the highest revenue per connection (over R250 per month) followed by Ethekweni and then Ekurhuleni.

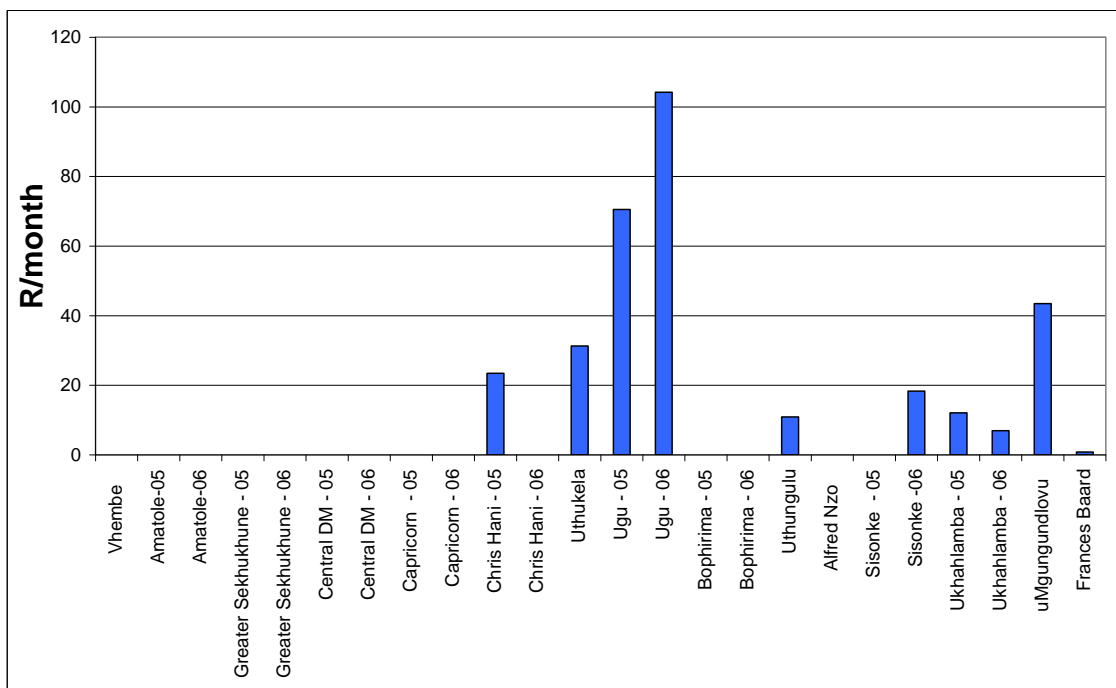


Figure 27: Revenue per connection per month per DM

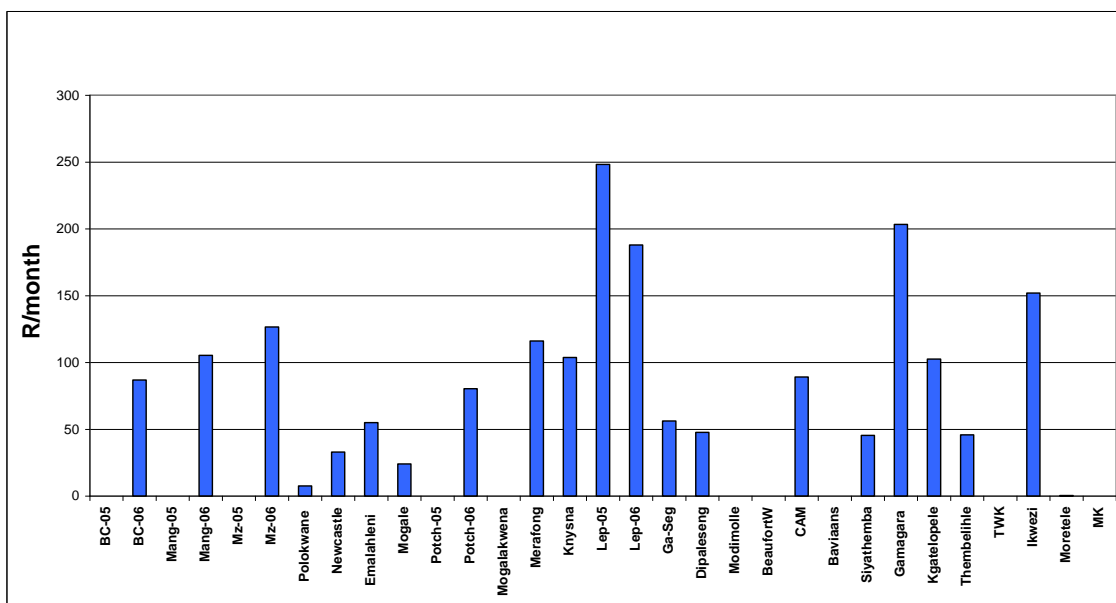


Figure 28: Revenue per connection per month for the LMs

For the LMs, the revenue per connection per month ranges from less than R50 to over R200.

5 Results and Analysis

This section presents the key findings of the benchmarking process and is structured largely by the performance indicators contained in the Strategic Framework for Water Services:

1. Access to basic water supply
2. Access to basic sanitation supply
3. Quality of services: Potable water quality
4. Quality of services: Continuity of supply
5. Access to free basic services (water)
6. Access to free basic services (sanitation)
7. Financial performance: Affordability and debtor management
8. Asset management: Metering coverage and unaccounted-for water
9. Protection of the environment: Effluent discharge quality

However, the benchmarking process did not use indicators for assessing Access to Free Basic Services for Water (5) and Sanitation (6).

This section sets out the performance of Water Services Authorities in terms of the key performance indicators identified, and analyses them within the three constitutionally defined categories of municipalities:

- Category A – Metropolitan Municipalities
- Category B – Local Municipalities
- Category C – District Municipalities

Each indicator (or group of indicators) is discussed in terms of the following:

- Definition,
- Importance or significance,
- Data sources (where applicable),
- Extent of reporting and confidence levels (reliability of data),
- Performance Analysis, and
- Implications and recommendations.

5.1 Access to basic water supply

5.1.1 Access to water services

Definition

Definition:

The percentage of households with access to at least a basic water supply as defined in the Strategic Framework.

Supporting definitions from the Strategic Framework:

Facility:

The infrastructure necessary to supply 25 litres of potable water per person per day supplied within 200 metres of a household and with a minimum flow of 10 litres per minute (in the case of communal water points) or 6 000 litres of potable water supplied per formal connection per month (in the case of yard or house connections).

Service:

The provision of a basic water supply facility, the sustainable operation of the facility (available for at least 350 days per year and not interrupted for more than 48 consecutive hours per incident) and the communication of good water-use, hygiene and related practices

Formula:

The number of households with a basic water service (functioning) divided by the total number of households in the service area.

Significance

This indicator coincides with Sector Target 1 in the Strategic Framework for Water Services (All people living in South Africa have access to a functioning basic water supply by 2008).

Data sources

Municipalities must be able to estimate the total number of households within their municipal area, and know (or estimate) the number of households with access to a *functioning* water service which meets the definition set out above.

Extent of reporting

45 municipalities were able to provide data on access.

Reliability of data (and interpretation of definition)

The level of reliability of the data for access is low, with many municipalities reporting their access data as estimates. It should be noted that reporting is mostly likely to relate to the availability of the infrastructure (the facility itself) and not the functioning of the facility as defined in the Strategic Framework. There are some inconsistencies in inter-year reporting on access for some municipalities. The most significant problem appears to be obtaining a reliable estimate of the total number of households within the municipality, and the confidence placed in this number.

There is no common definition of household. This is left to the municipality to define (and state). The intention is to harmonise on best practice over time.

Performance Analysis

The Analysis are reported in following three figures.

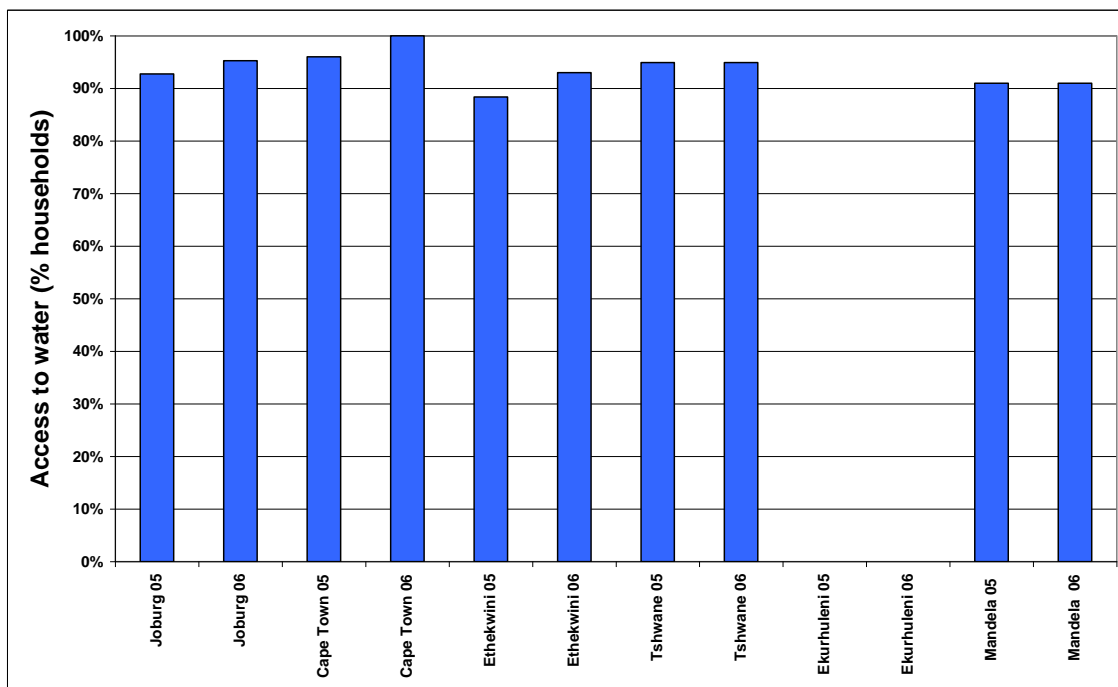


Figure 29: Access to water supply in Metros

Access to water is good in most Metros as would be expected (all in excess of 90% of households). It is anticipated that the backlogs shown are largely housing related.

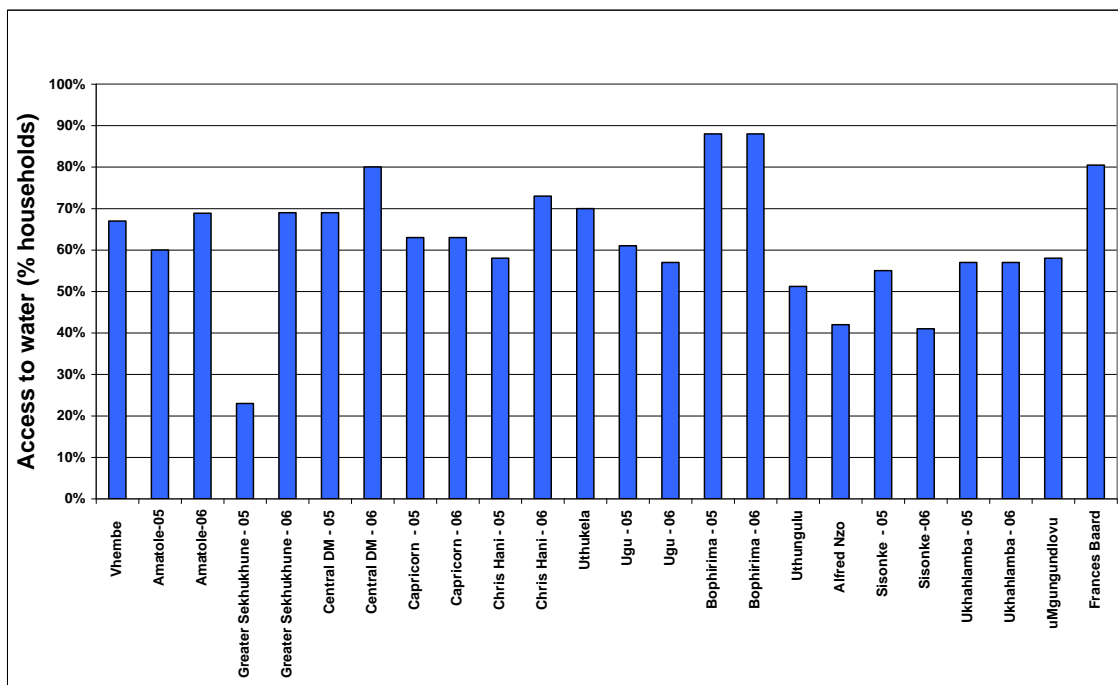


Figure 30: Access to water supply for DMs

Access to water services in the WSAs who are districts is much lower, with most reporting access of below 70%. It is expected that services conditions would be most difficult in the district municipalities acting as WSAs, as these municipalities have large

rural populations with low levels of access and service in the past (that is, large backlogs to catch up).

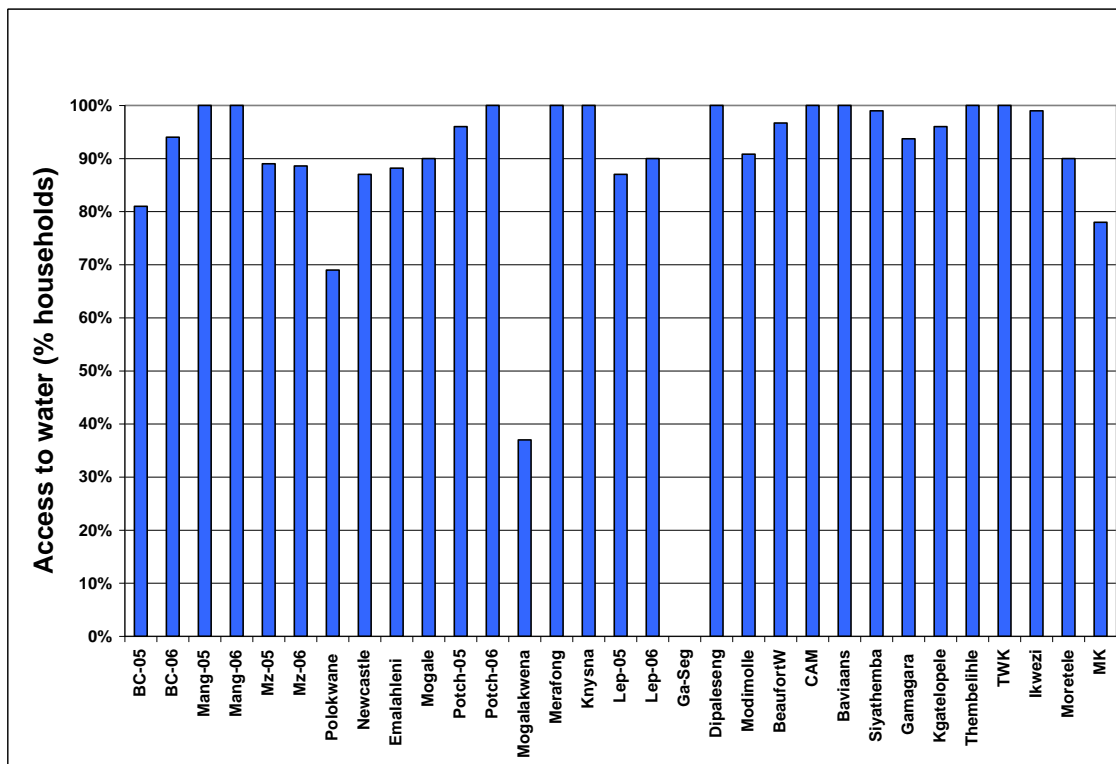


Figure 31: Access to water supply for LMs

The percentage access to services in LMs is good with most in the LMs reporting an access figure of 90% or more.

5.1.2 Absolute backlog for water

Definition

Definition:

The number of households without access to at least a basic supply (As defined in the Strategic Framework)

Supporting definitions from the Strategic Framework:

Facility:

The infrastructure necessary to supply 25 litres of potable water per person per day supplied within 200 metres of a household and with a minimum flow of 10 litres per minute (in the case of communal water points) or 6 000 litres of potable water supplied per formal connection per month (in the case of yard or house connections).

Service:

The provision of a basic water supply facility, the sustainable operation of the facility (available for at least 350 days per year and not interrupted for more than 48 consecutive hours per incident) and the communication of good water-use, hygiene and related practices

Significance

This indicator provides insight into size of the challenge (to provide at least a basic level of water supply service to all residents) and arises from the Strategic Framework for Water Services.

Data sources, extent of reporting and reliability of data

See previous indicator.

Performance Analysis

The number of households without access to a basic level of water supply is shown in the graphs below.

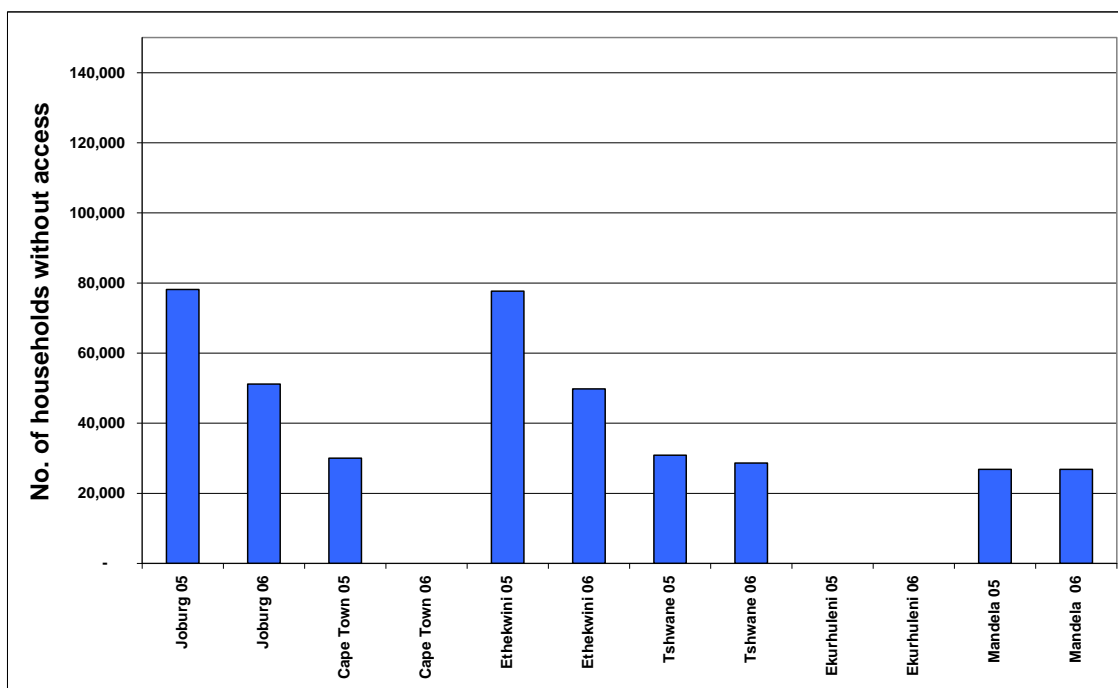


Figure 32: Absolute backlog for water in the Metros

The size of the backlog in Metro areas is not insignificant (about 160 000 households in total excluding Ekurhuleni who did not provide data for this indicator). Nevertheless, it is encouraging that the size of the backlog appears to be reducing significantly in size where the backlog is largest (in Joburg and Ethekwini). Cape Town reports that their backlogs for water services have been eliminated. Tshwane reduced its’ backlog, but not very significantly and Nelson Mandela did not report any significant progress here.

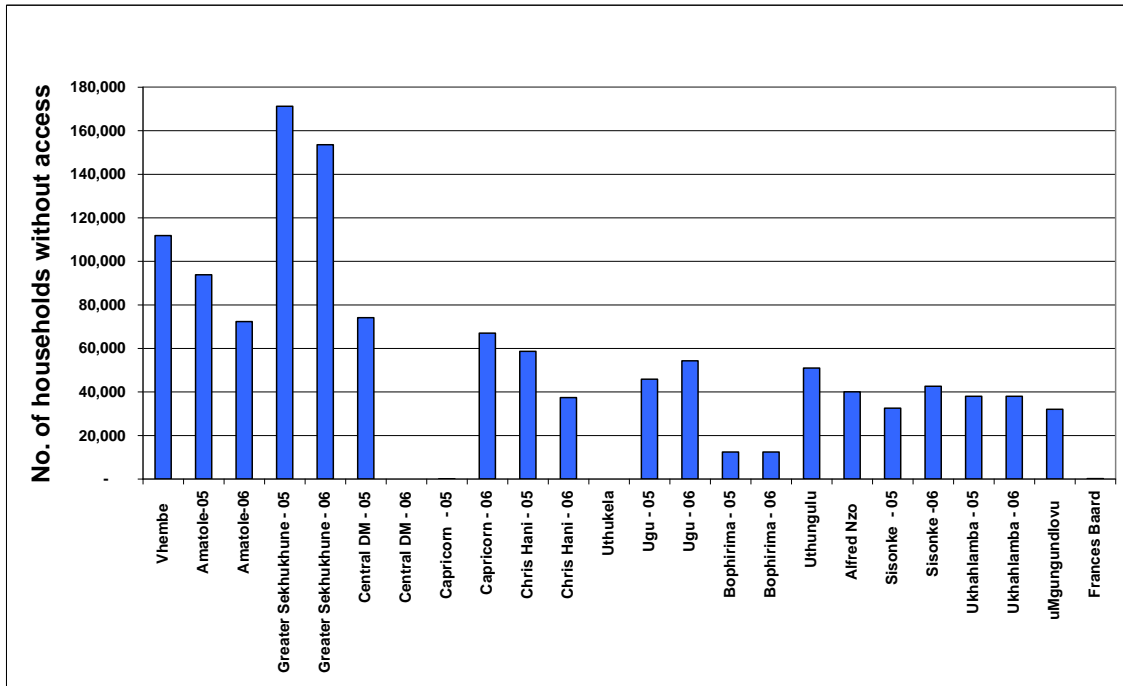


Figure 33: Absolute backlog for water in the DMs

The backlog in Greater Sekhukhune District is very significant (about 150 000 households), though it is encouraging to see that this is reducing. Many other districts also face significant backlogs in the range from 50 000 to 100 000 or more.

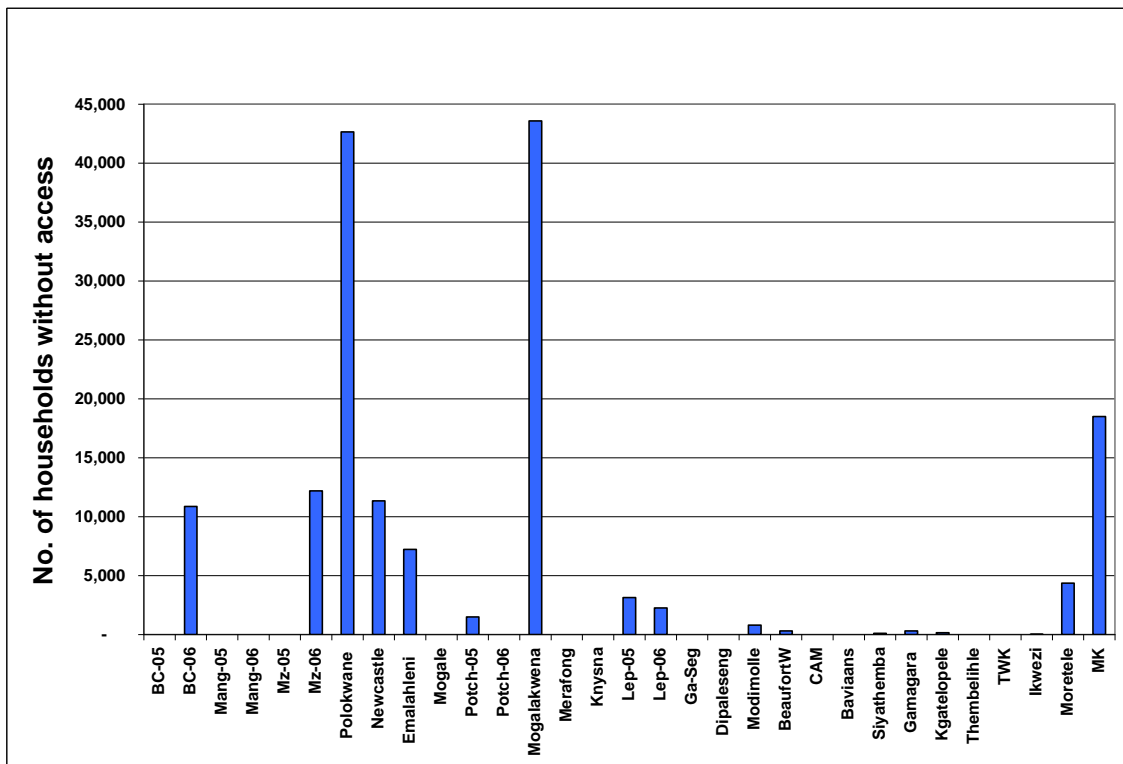


Figure 34: Absolute backlog for water in the LMs

The backlogs in the LMs are generally much smaller (and in some cases close to zero) with the exceptions of Polokwane and Mogalakwane where the backlogs are between 40 000 and 45 000 households.

5.1.3 Rate of backlog reduction in water supply

Definition

Definition:

The percentage reduction in the number of households without access to at least a basic water supply (as defined in the Strategic Framework)

Formula:

$(\text{backlog last year} - \text{backlog this year}) / (\text{backlog this year})$

Significance

This indicator shows that the rate at which the backlog is being reduced, and can indicate (albeit indirectly) the likelihood of the access target being met. For example, if the target for eradicating the backlog is 3 years away, then the rate of reduction in the backlog should be of the order of 33% if the target is to be reached. This arises from the Strategic Framework for Water Services.

Reliability of data

The inter-year data on absolute backlogs was not deemed to be stable enough to report meaningfully on this indicator at this stage.

5.2 Access to basic sanitation supply

5.2.1 Access to sanitation services

Definition

Definition:

The percentage of households with access to at least a sanitation service as defined in the Strategic Framework

Supporting definition from the Strategic Framework:*Facility:*

The infrastructure necessary to provide a sanitation service is safe, reliable, private, protected from the weather, ventilated, keeps smells to the minimum, is easy to keep clean, minimises the risk of the spread of sanitation-related diseases by facilitating the appropriate control of disease-carrying pests, and enables safe and appropriate treatment and/or removal of human waste and wastewater in an environmentally sound manner.

Service:

The provision of a basic sanitation facility which is easily accessible to a household, the sustainable operation of the facility, including the safe removal of human waste and wastewater from the premises where this is appropriate and necessary, and the communication of good sanitation, hygiene and related practices.

Formula:

The number of households with access to at least a basic sanitation service divided by the total number of households

The definition of backlog includes bucket toilets, unimproved pit latrines and chemical toilets (as the latter is regarded as only a temporary and expensive solution).

Significance

This indicator coincides with Sector Target 2 in the Strategic Framework for Water Services (All people living in South Africa have access to a functioning basic sanitation facility by 2010).

Data sources

Municipalities must be able to estimate the total number of households within their municipal area, and know (or estimate) the number of households with access to a *functioning* basic sanitation service which meets the definition set out above.

Extent of reporting

46 municipalities were able to provide data on access to sanitation.

Reliability of data (and interpretation of the definition)

The reliability of this data is similar to that for access to water (most data provided were estimates). It should be noted that reporting is mostly likely to relate to the availability of the infrastructure (the facility itself) and not the functioning of the facility as defined in the Strategic Framework. There is also some confusion as to whether or not the definition of a basic supply should include chemical toilets as this is a form of bucket toilet.

Performance Analysis

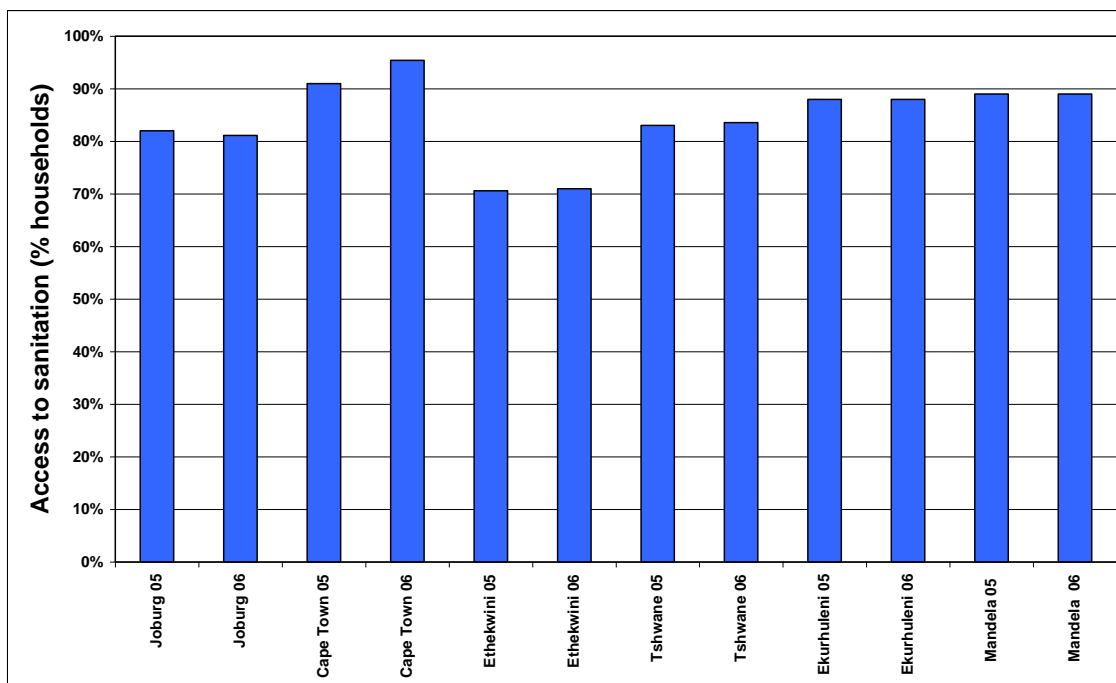


Figure 35: Access to sanitation in Metros

Ethekwini reports about 70% access to adequate sanitation, Joburg 80%, Tshwane 83%, Ekurhuleni and Nelson Mandela close to 90% and Cape Town 95%.

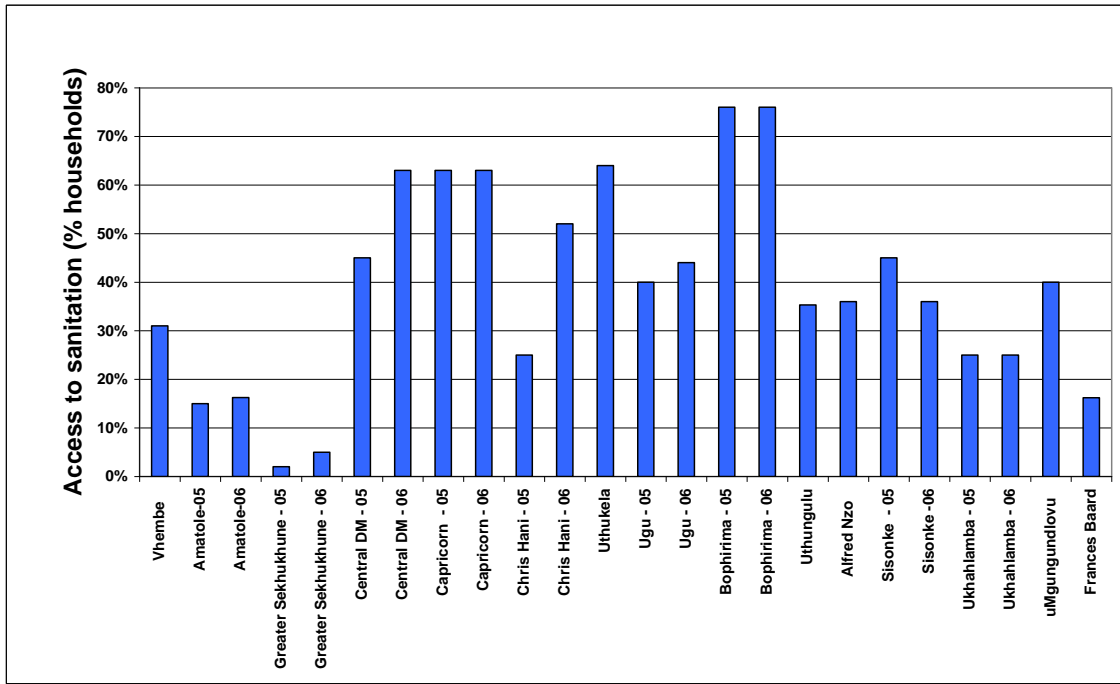


Figure 36: Access to sanitation in the DMs

In the DMs access ranges from 5 % (Greater Sekhukhune) to over 75% (Bophirima).

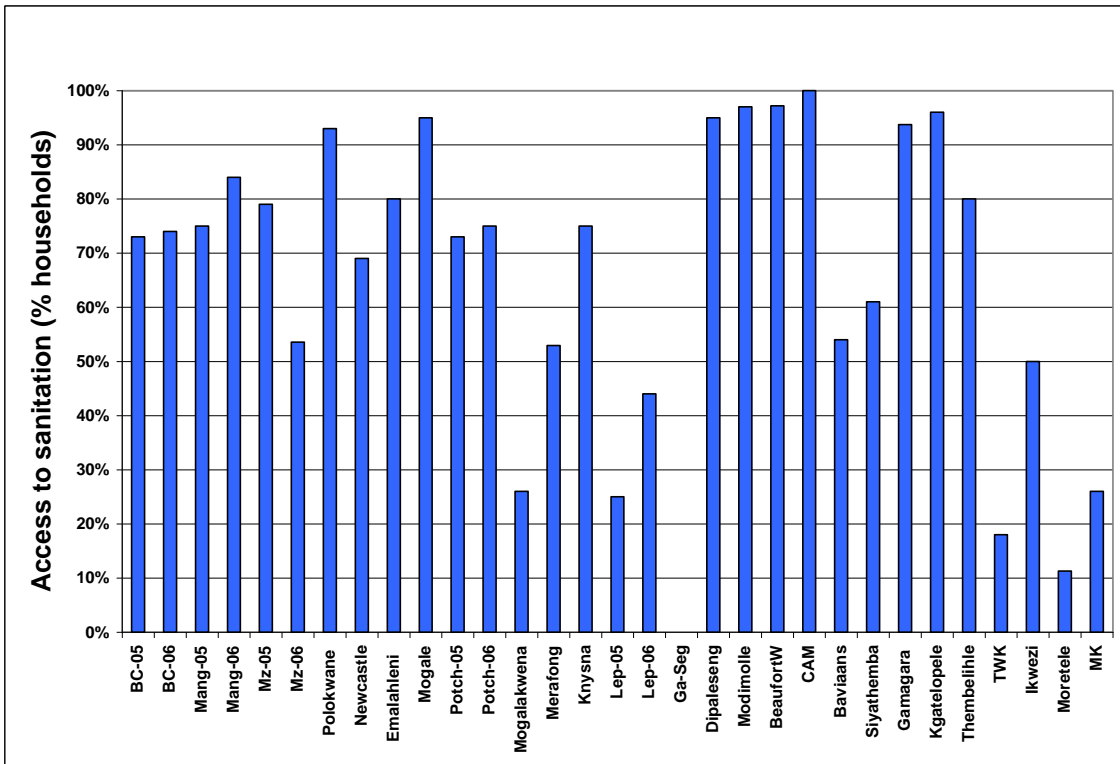


Figure 37: Access to sanitation in the LMs

Of the 24 LMs that responded to this indicator 11 provide a basic level of sanitation to over 80 % of the households in the municipality.

5.2.2 Absolute backlog with respect to sanitation services

Definition

Definition:

The number of households without access to at least a basic sanitation service.

Sanitation services:

The collection, removal, disposal or treatment of human excreta and domestic wastewater, and the collection, treatment and disposal of industrial wastewater. This includes all necessary organisational arrangements, including:

- appropriate health, hygiene and sanitation-related awareness
- monitoring quantity and quality of discharge
- billing, revenue collection, consumer care

Significance

This indicator provides insight into size of the challenge (to provide at least a basic level of sanitation service to all residents). This arises from the Strategic Framework for Water Services.

Data sources, extent of reporting and reliability of data

See previous indicator.

Performance Analysis

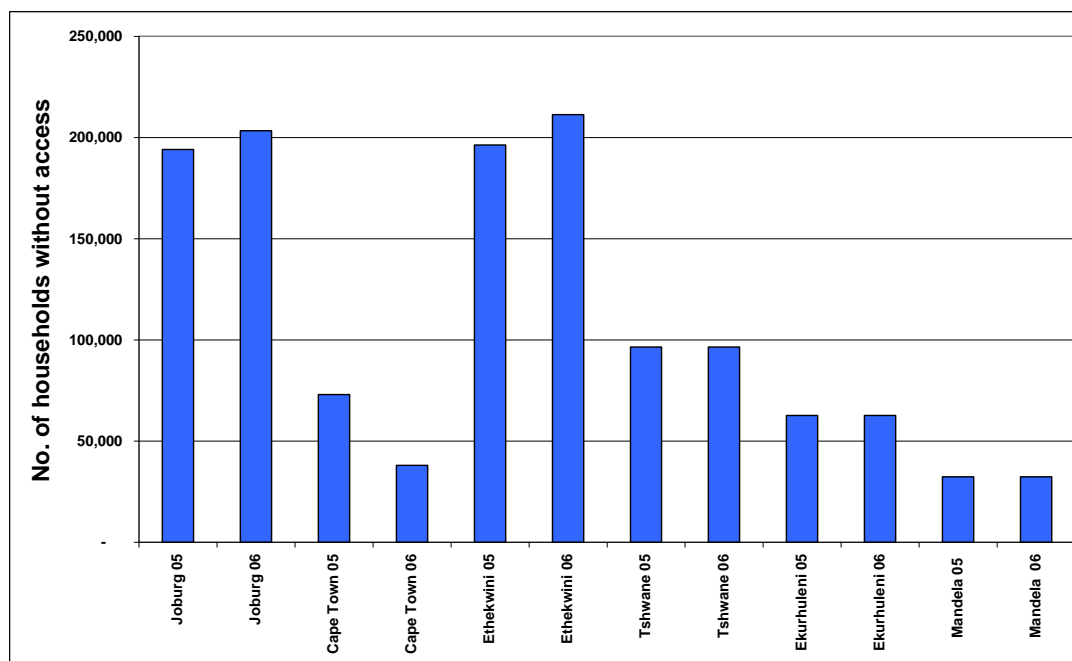


Figure 38: Absolute sanitation backlog for the Metros

The absolute backlog is very significant in both Joburg and Ethekwini (about 200 000 households in each case), reasonably significant in Tshwane (about 100 000 households) and at a slight smaller (though not insignificant) scale for Ekurhuleni

(about 65 000 households), Nelson Mandela and Cape Town (about 30 000 to 40 000 in each).

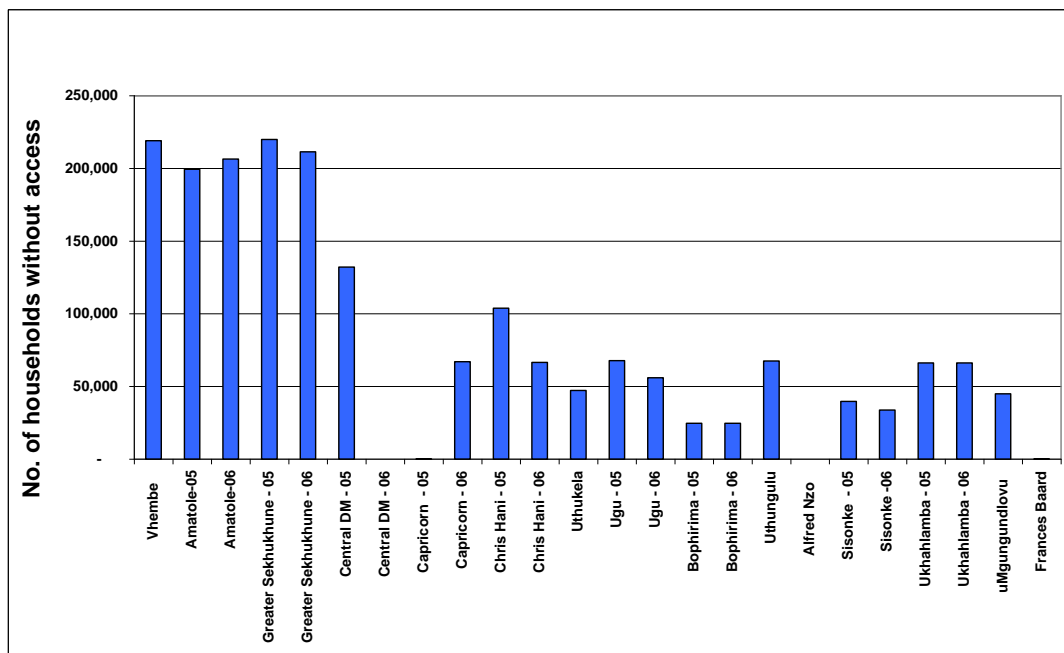


Figure 39: Absolute sanitation backlog for DMs

Three districts face very significant backlogs (Vembe, Amatole and Greater Sekhukhune). Backlogs in some of the other districts are not insignificant (some are of the order of 60 000 households and some less).

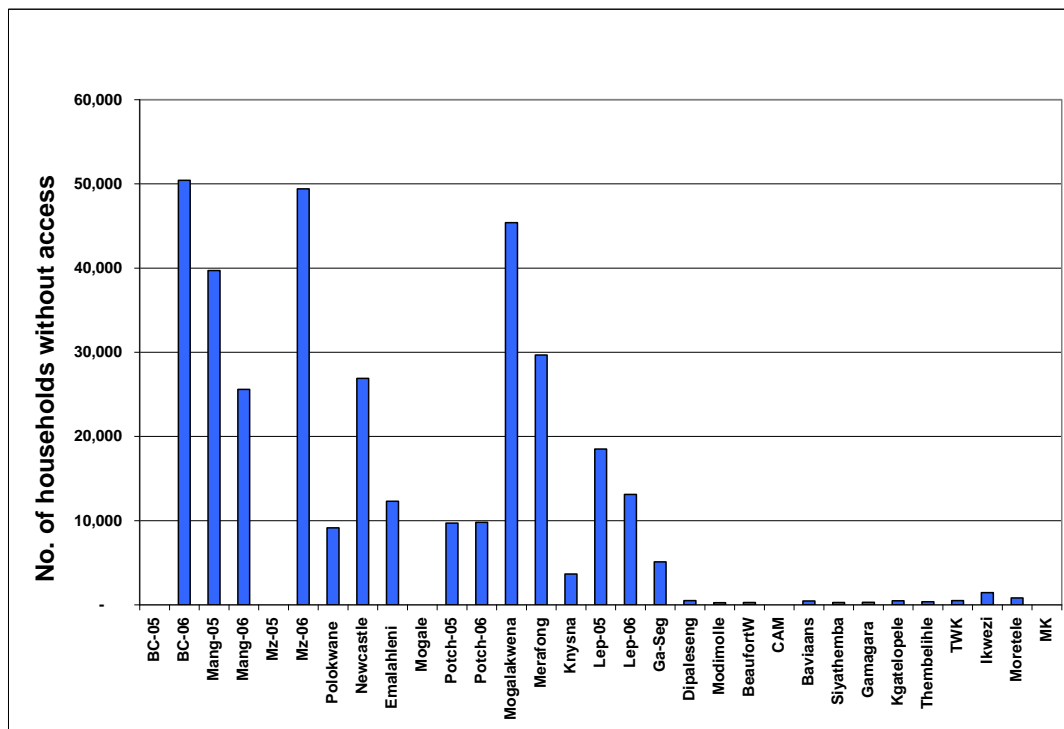


Figure 40: Absolute sanitation backlogs for LMs

Backlogs are also significant for about half of the LMs. Many of the smaller LMs report insignificant backlogs.

Implications

Meeting the sanitation backlog target (2010) will be a significant challenge. The provision of sanitation to informal settlements, particularly in the metropolitan areas where these settlements are growing rapidly, is a formidable challenge.

5.3 Quality of services: Potable water quality

5.3.1 Choice and significance of indicators

The following indicators were chosen to assess performance in the areas of drinking water quality:

Water quality monitoring program: Legislation requires that an effective water quality monitoring programme (which monitors the quality of water *in* the distribution network and at the point of end consumption) meeting defined standards be in place in all municipalities. It should be noted that the quality of water can deteriorate in the distribution network (as a result of time from treatment which may lower the chlorine residual and contamination of the water from ingress).

Incidence of E-coli: E-Coli are bacteria whose presence indicates that the water may be contaminated with human or animal wastes. Microbes in these wastes can cause short-term effects, such as diarrhoea, cramps, nausea, headaches, or other symptoms.

Incidence of turbidity: Turbidity (itself) has no health effects. However, turbidity can interfere with disinfection and provide a medium for microbial growth. These organisms include bacteria, viruses, and parasites that can cause symptoms such as nausea, cramps, diarrhoea, and associated headaches. Turbidity is an indicator of the operational performance of the treatment works as treatment processes aim to reduce turbidity to below an acceptable limit.

The indicators in themselves, do not arise from current legislation. However the Water Services Act requires water service authorities to monitor water quality and respond.

The Benchmarking conference held in February 2007, recorded a request for an additional indicator: response to sample failure incidents. This will be taken into consideration in the next benchmarking cycle.

5.3.2 Water quality monitoring program

Definition

Definition:

The WSA has instituted a drinking water quality sampling programme in accordance with the DWQF and SANS 241 requirements.

Programme Requirements:

Sampling is to be done in the Distribution Network.

- Standards are clearly defined for each source and supply area,
- Sampling is taking place as required,
- Tests are carried out by an accredited laboratory,
- Results are recorded and stored, and
- Results are reported.

Formula:

The municipality must indicate whether it has a **full** (meets all the requirements), **partial** (meets some requirements) or **no** (does not undertake routine monitoring) programme in place.

Significance

This is a very significant indicator. It is not possible to be confident of the quality of water being supplied to consumers without such a monitoring programme in place.

Data

Forty one municipalities provided data on the status of their drinking water quality monitoring systems.

Interpretation of the definition

The interpretation of this indicator should be relatively straightforward. However, it is not clear how strictly the criteria for a full programme were applied, and how uniform this was across municipalities. Strictly speaking, a full programme should include *all* communities supplied with water and *all* supply systems. In practice this is very difficult to achieve, especially where municipalities are responsible for large numbers of distributed local systems. In these cases, it is likely that municipalities are referring to their core urban areas when reporting that a full system is in place.

Analysis

All the metros stated that they have a drinking water quality monitoring programme in place which meets the required standards. Six of the DMs indicated having a full water quality monitoring systems which meet the required standards, 7 a partial programme, 1 no programme and 2 did not respond to the question. In the DMs it is a challenge to implement a compliant drinking water quality monitoring systems as a result of the numerous distributed rural water supply networks. With regards to the LMs; 12 have a full water drinking quality monitoring programme in place, 8 a partial programme, 1 no programme and 5 did not provide an indication of whether they have a drinking water quality monitoring programme in place which meets the required standards.

Relationship with other initiatives

A National Drinking Water Quality monitoring initiative is underway. The objectives of this initiative are to (among others) ensure that there is an adequate drinking water quality monitoring system in place in each WSA.

Implications

Support to municipalities who do not have a drinking water quality monitoring system in place (or only have a partial system in place) should be considered a high priority.

5.3.3 Incidence of E-coli

Definition

Definition:

The percentage of total samples taken that fails the E-coli standard.

E-coli standard:

Zero count per 100 millilitre sample

Formula:

The number of samples failing divided by the total number of samples taken

Significance

This is significant indicator. Sample failures here indicate health risk.

Data

The data for this should be relatively straightforward, comprising the total number of samples taken (in the course of routine sampling) and the total number of sample failures reported for these samples.

Interpretation of the indicator

The indicator chosen is deliberately simplified so as to maximise the chances of getting a reported indicator. Care should be taken when interpreting this indicator. The way that the indicator is calculated does not lend itself to interpretations as to the significance of failure. For example, the samples and failures could look something like this (fictitious data):

System	Population served	Samples taken	Samples failed	% failure
1	10 000	30	0	0%
2	500	10	2	20%
Total		40	2	5%

In the example above, the incidence of risk rests on the community of 500, and not the community of 10 000. So an overall sample failure of 5% (related to a total population served of 10 500) is somewhat misleading in relation to the overall incidence of risk.

Notwithstanding this limitation, a simplified definition of this indicator will be kept until such time as widespread data from the more comprehensive drinking water quality monitoring systems become available, that is, when all or most municipalities have adopted a system which allows for more nuanced and robust reporting. In other words, it is not considered to be realistic to include a more sophisticated definition and analysis of sample failure at this stage.

Analysis

The incidence of samples failing the *E-coli* tests in the Metros was generally below 2 %, whereas for the DMs it was never below 2 % and for the LM it was typically above 2 %.

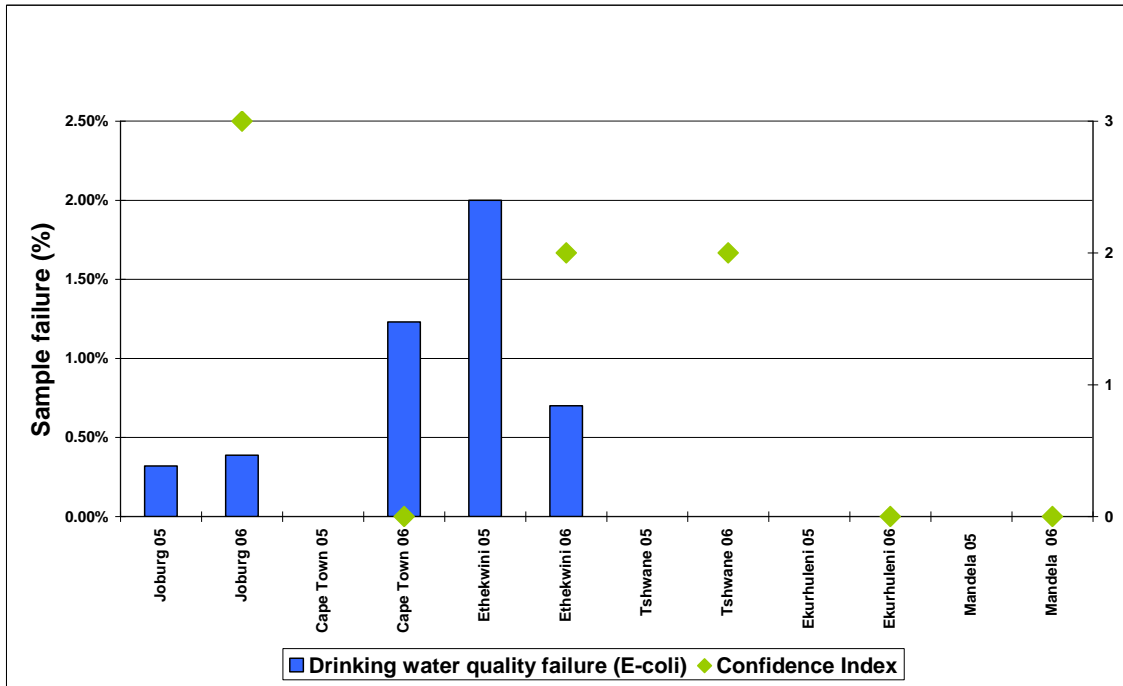


Figure 41: Drinking water quality (E-coli) for the Metros

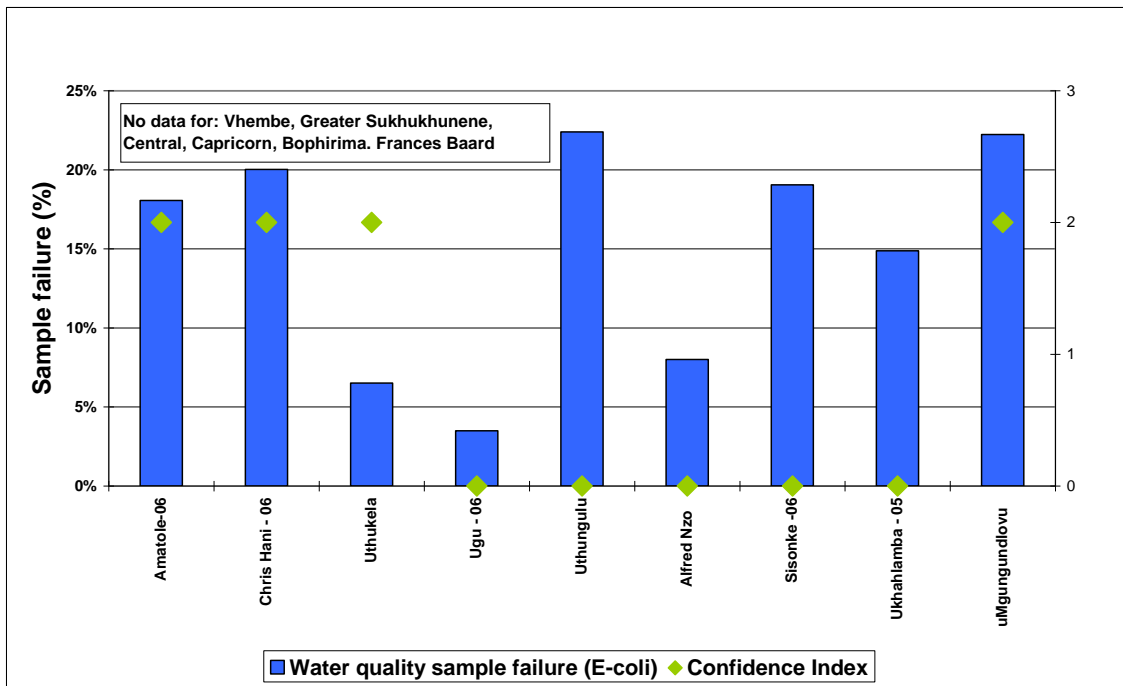


Figure 42: Drinking water quality (E-coli) for the DMs

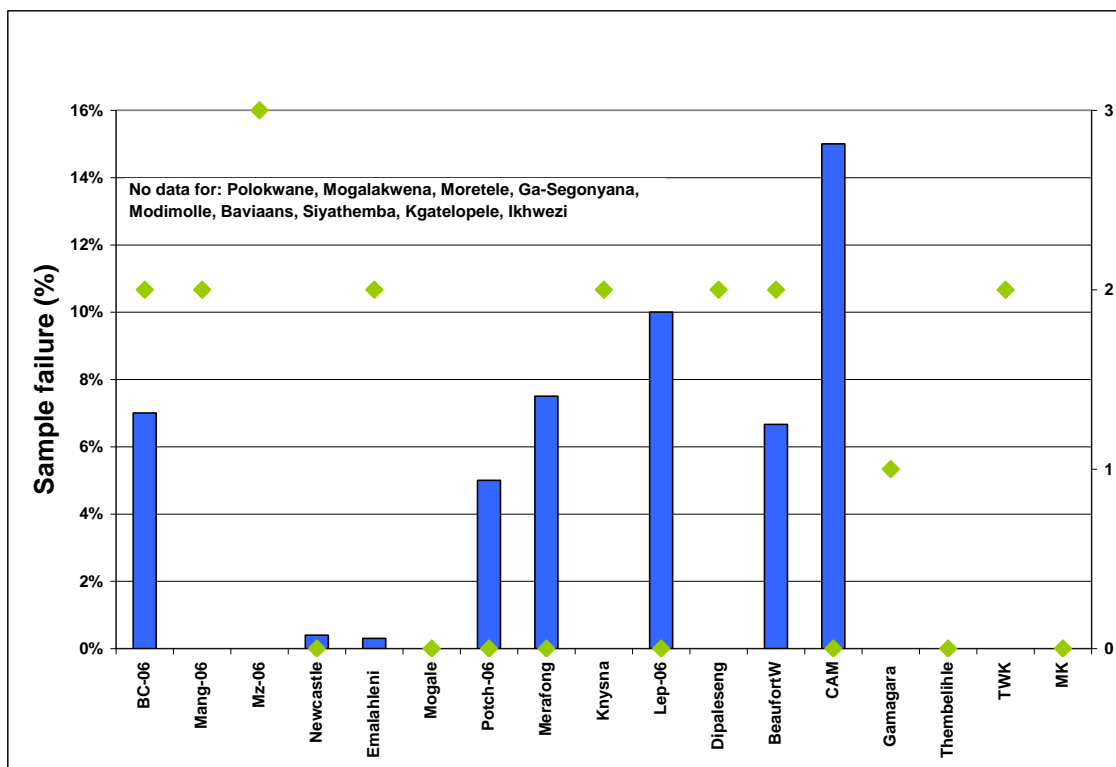


Figure 43: Drinking water quality (E-coli) for the LMs

Implications

The concerted national effort on drinking water quality is warranted and should be continued and intensified.

5.3.4 Incidence of turbidity

Definition

<p>Definition: The percentage of total samples taken that fail the turbidity test</p> <p>Standard: < 1 (Class 1) 1 – 5 (Class 2)</p> <p>Formula: The number of samples failing divided by the total number of samples taken</p>

Analysis

Reporting on this indicator was sparse and consequently this indicator is not reported on for the current period.

Implications

Not withstanding incomplete reporting on this indicator, it was decided at the conference to maintain this indicator.

5.4 Quality of services: Continuity of supply

5.4.1 Customer service standards

Service interruptions greater than 48 hours for a single incident

Definition

Definition:

The number of interruptions in continuous service to consumers per annum, where interruptions for a single incident was greater than 48 hours.

Importance or significance

This indicator gives a measure of the responsiveness to the municipality to service delivery interruptions and hence measures its capacity to respond to interruptions, its institutional capability in terms of customer care and the ability to monitor internal performance. This measure is also a requirement of the Strategic Framework for Water Services.

Performance Analysis

This indicator was not reported by most of the municipalities participating in the study and hence is not reported here.

Implications and recommendations

The ability to measure this KPI is dependent on the municipality having a customer care facility and sophisticated reporting systems and hence the indicator should be either simplified or left until such reporting is more generally available at the municipal level. In the mean time, it is recommended that the reporting of this KPI set is pursued for the Metro and B1 municipalities.

5.4.2 WSA annual report

Definition

Definition:

The WSA reports annually on performance and a copy is submitted to the Minister

Importance or significance

A requirement of the WSA and a target stated in the Strategic Framework for Water Services is that all WSAs will report annually on progress against their WSDPs by 2005.

Performance Analysis

27 of the 48 respondents could not state whether they had submitted a report or not, 8 submitted reports and the remainder did not submit reports.

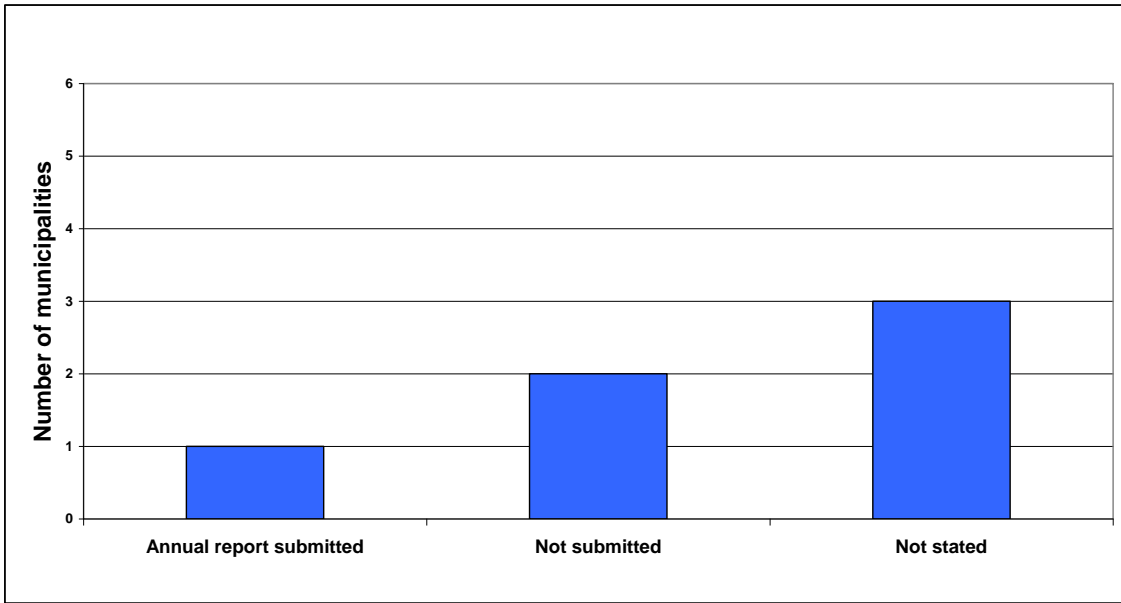


Figure 44: Reporting in the Metros

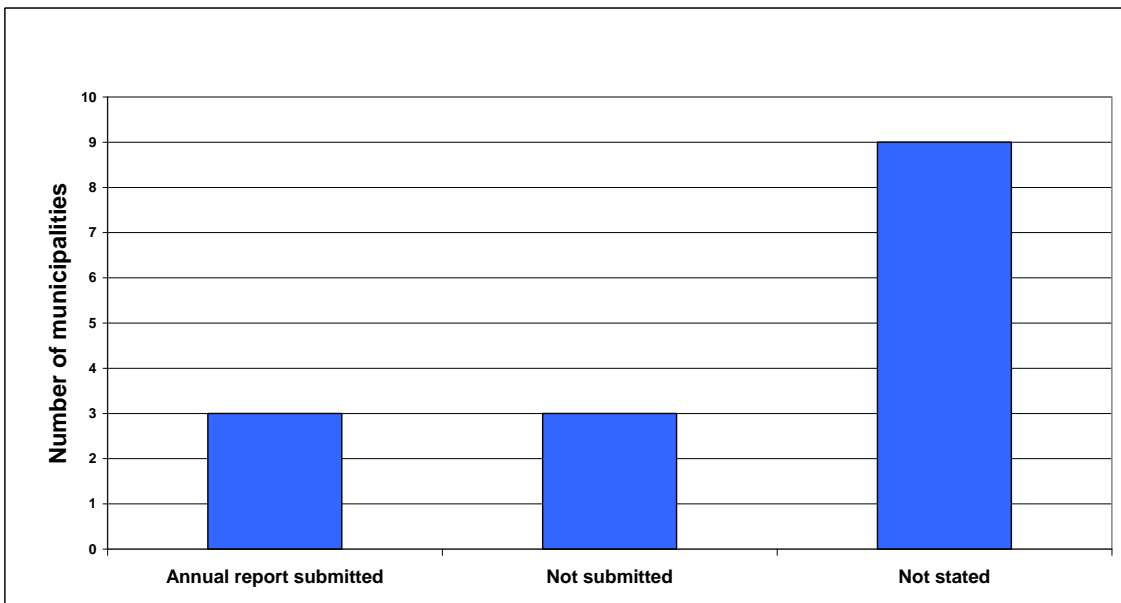


Figure 45: Reporting in the DMs

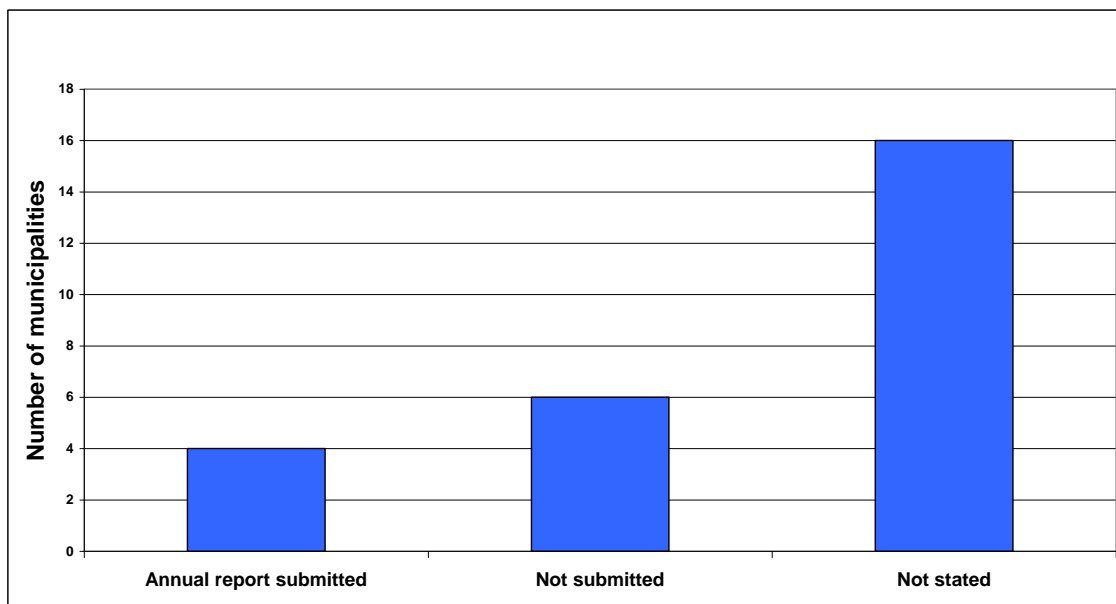


Figure 46: Reporting in the LMs

Implications

Greater clarity is required with respect to the annual reporting required of WSAs.

5.4.3 Staff per 1000 connections

Definition

Definition:
 Staff employed or contracted by the WSA in the execution of the water and sanitation services business per 1000 water service connections.

Formula:
 Number of staff divided by (number of connections over 1000).

Importance or significance

An international measure of institutional capacity is the measure of dedicated water services staff per 1000 connections.

Extent of reporting

1 of 6 Metros, 7 of 15 DMs and 11 of 26 LMs did not report on staffing levels.

The DM data illustrated below should be viewed with caution because of the low number of DMs that did report and the wide disparity of the data supplied.

Performance Analysis

The average number of staff from the municipalities that supplied information is 4 staff members per 1000 connections for the Metros, 10 staff members per 1000 connections for the DMs and 6 staff members per 1000 connections for the LMs.

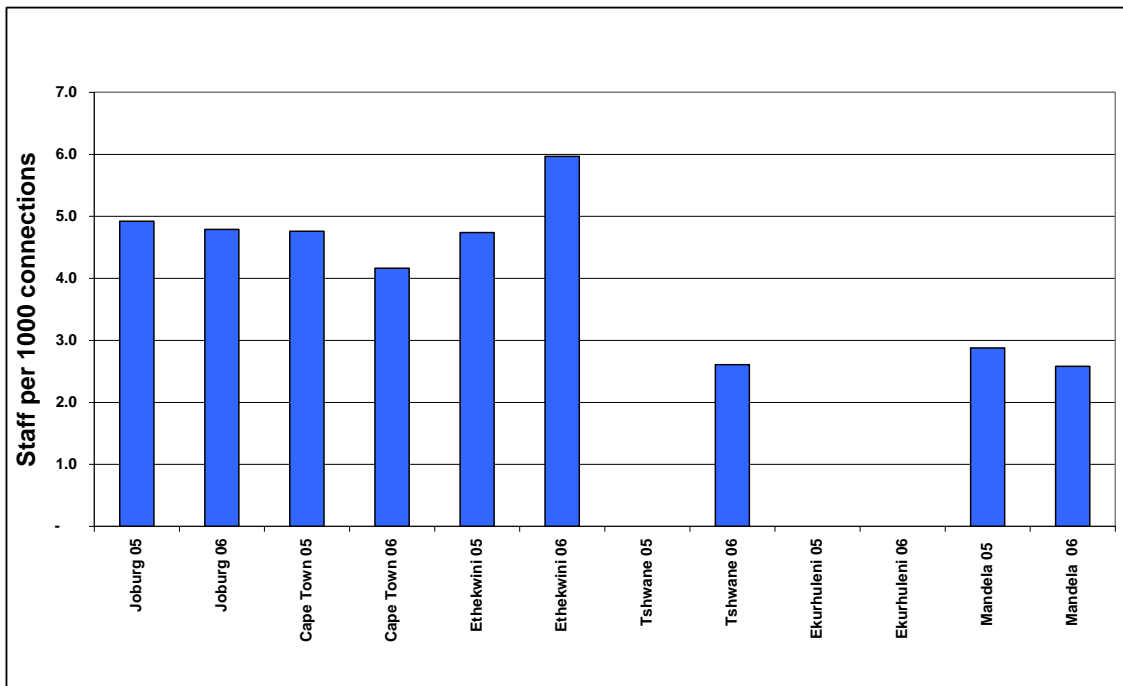


Figure 47: Staff per 1000 connections in the Metros

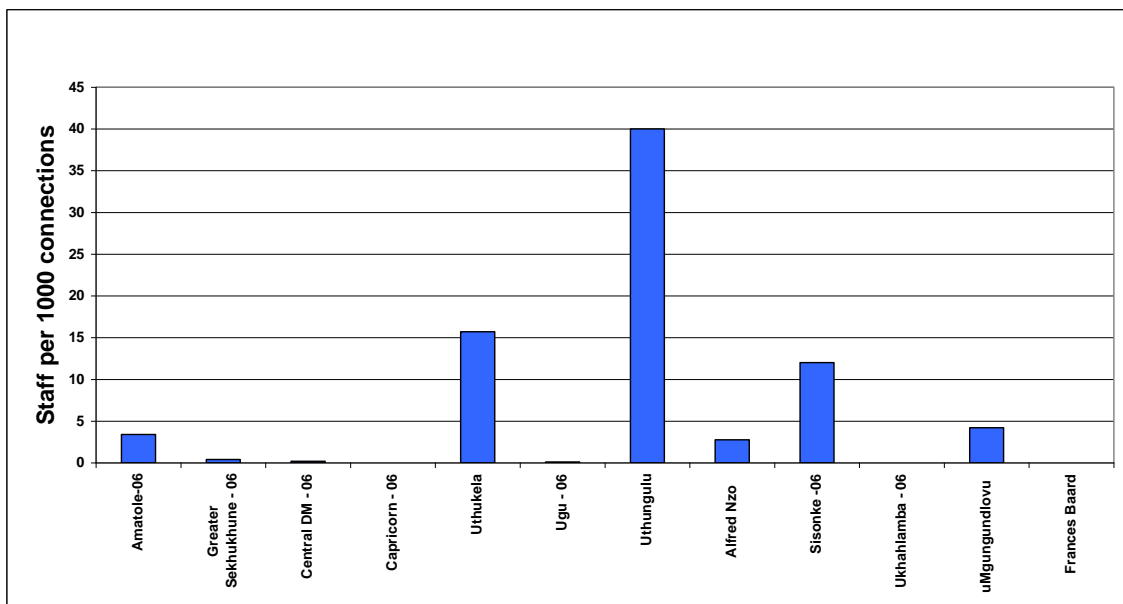


Figure 48: Staff per 1000 connections in the DMs

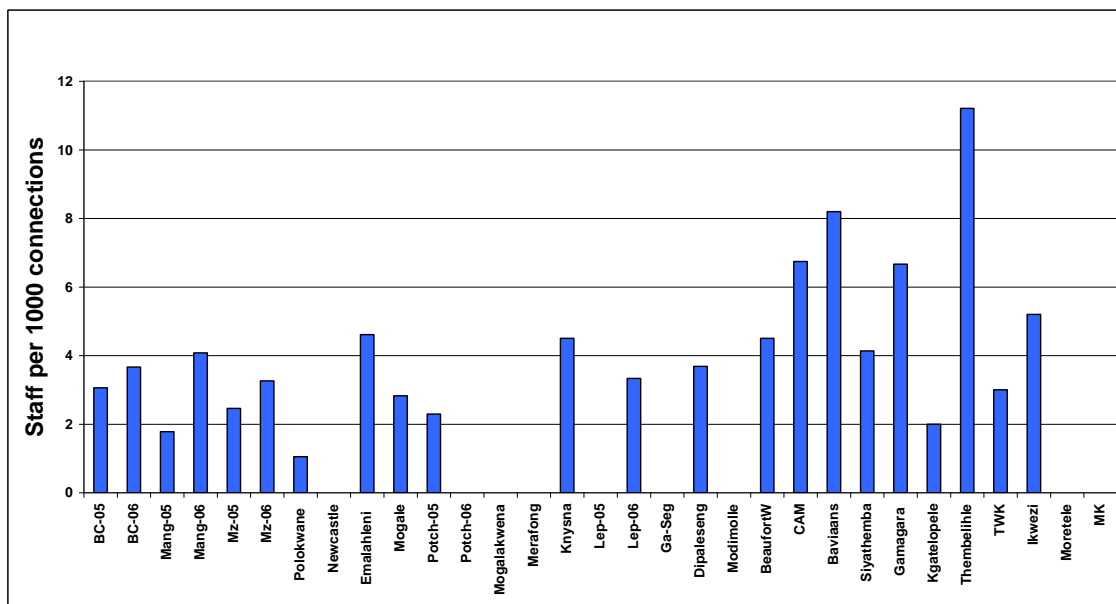


Figure 49: Staff per 1000 connections in LMs

Implications

Care should be taken in interpreting this data. It is recommended that more detailed human resource capacity data be gathered in future, indicating the level of skill available to the municipality. It also need to be clarified that the staff should include all WSPs operating within the WSA area.

5.5 Financial performance

5.5.1 Domestic water tariff

Definition

Definition:

The average tariff for a non-indigent domestic consumer using 10 kl (30 kl) of water per month, including a fixed fee component and VAT

Formula:

The actual cost to consumer (Rands per month) for consumption of 10 kl (30 kl) divided by 10 (30)

Significance

Care should be taken when interpreting this data. Price can vary for many reasons, for example, raw and/or bulk water costs may vary due to physical arrangements, economies of scale, local conditions.

This indicator is drawn from the Strategic Framework for Water Services.

Analysis

Average tariffs for non-indigent residential consumers consuming 10 and 30 kl per month respective are given below.

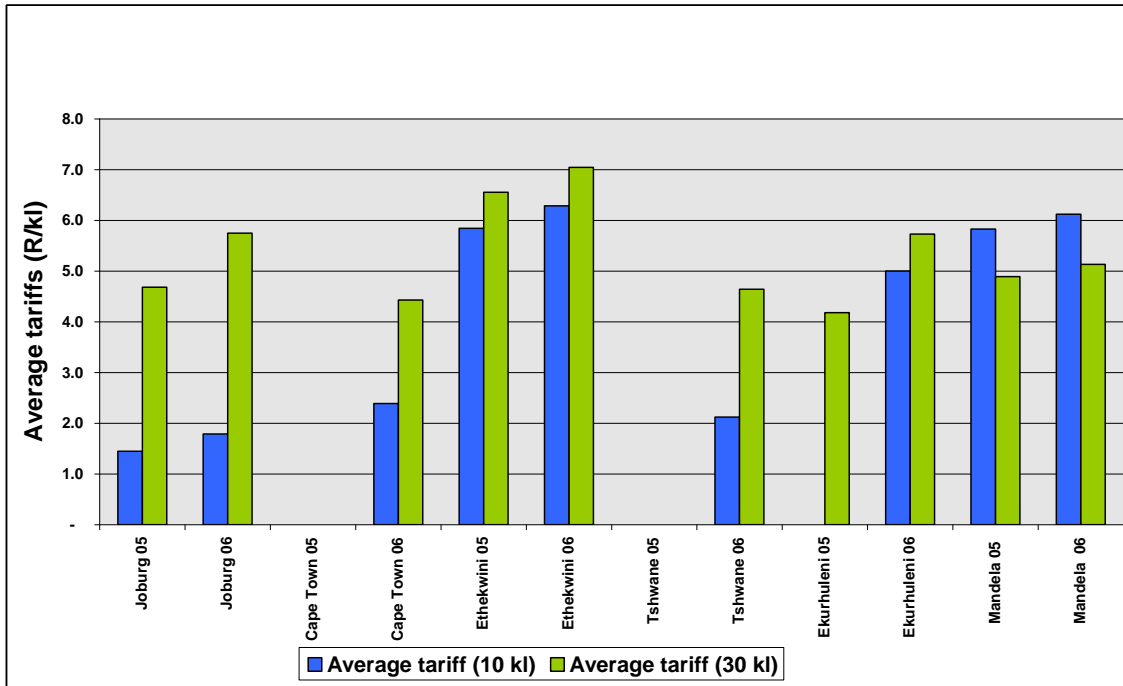


Figure 50: Average tariffs for Metros

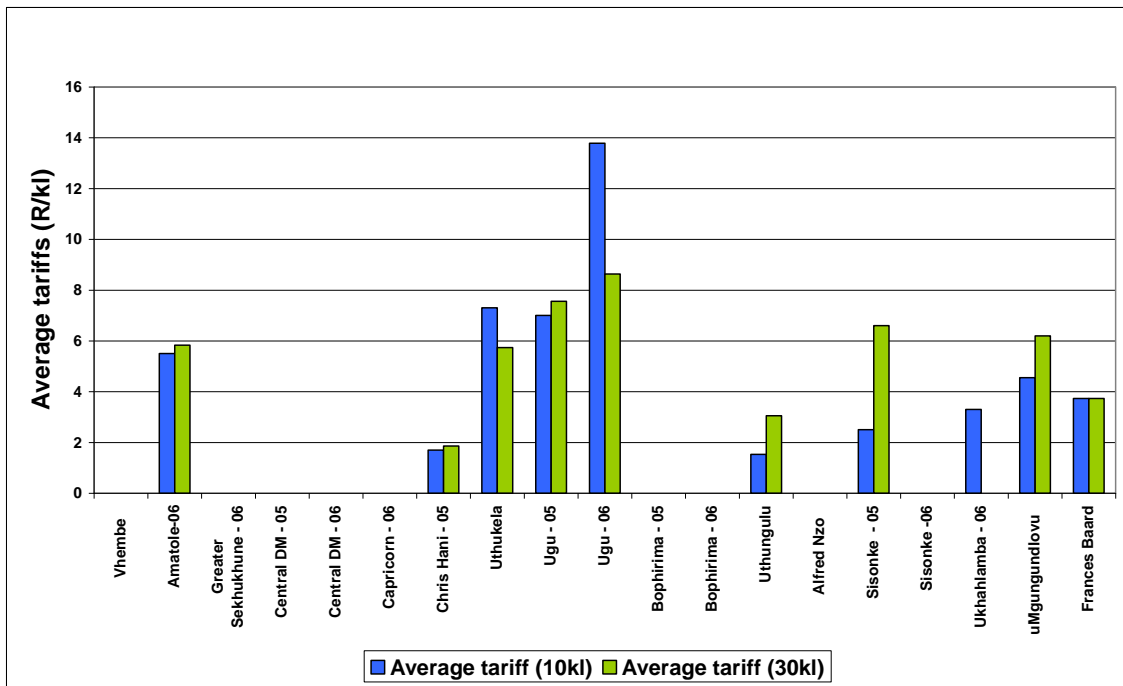


Figure 51: Average tariffs for DMs

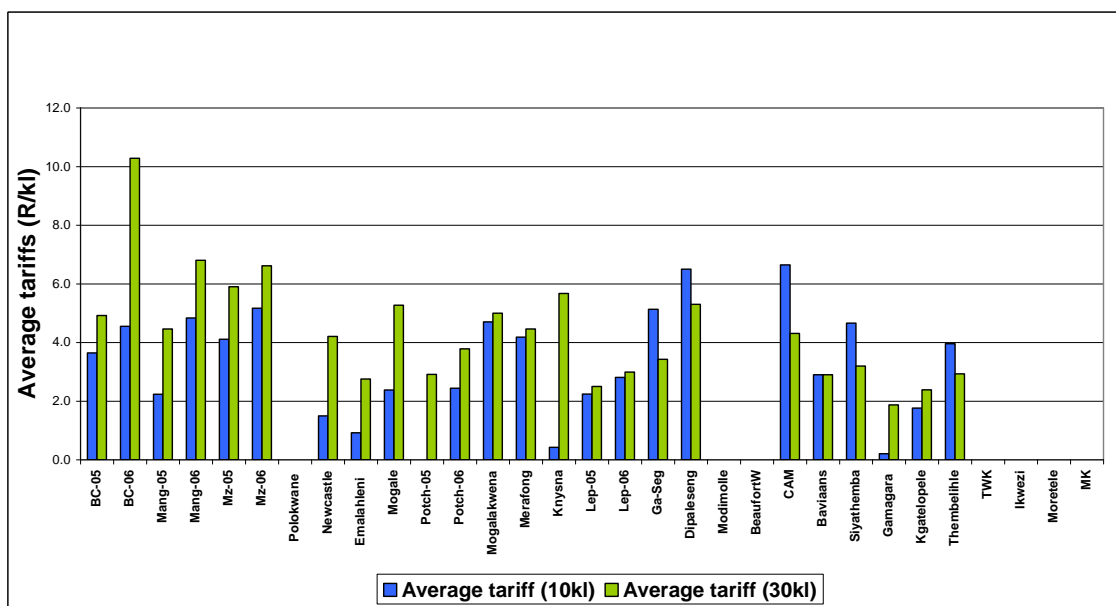


Figure 52: Average tariffs for LMUs

Implications

More detailed analysis at a municipal level on a case by case basis is required before being able to draw any conclusions in relation to this exercise. These detailed studies could assess the following:

- The degree to which all costs required to run a sustainable service are taken into account (including depreciation, provisions for rehabilitation, adequate funds for maintenance)
- The degree to which costs are efficient
- The degree to which revenues meet the required sustainable, efficient expenses.

5.5.2 Accounting practise

Definition

Definition:

The WSAs water services finances are ring-fenced according to one of the listed arrangements;

Options:

- Fully ring fenced #1: separate legal entity
- Fully ring fenced #2: separate accounting entity
- Partially ring fenced
- Not ring fenced

Interpretation

A definition of ring-fencing is provided in the Draft National Water Services Regulation Strategy. It is not clear to what extent this definition was consistently applied when

answering the question on ring-fencing. The concept of partial ring-fenced is somewhat vague.

Analysis

Within the constraints of interpretation identified above, the following reporting was obtained.

3 of the Metros are fully ring fenced, 1 partially and 2 are not ring fenced at all. With regards to the DMs 1 DM is fully ring fenced, 6 are partially ring fenced and 3 are not ring fenced. Of the LMs that provided data only 1 is fully ring fenced.

Implications

More concerted effort to promote the financial ring-fencing of water services is warranted.

5.5.3 Cash collection efficiency

Definition

Definition:

Percentage of total amount billed for water that has been collected from consumers

Formula:

Cash collected for water sales for the year divided by the total amount billed for the sale of water for the year

Importance or significance

This KPI is an indicator of how well the municipality manages its revenue from water services.

Extent of reporting

1 Metro, 9 DMs and 9 LMs did not report on the indicator.

4 Metros, 2 DMs and 1 LM recorded that their data supplied had been audited.

Performance Analysis

The Metros that provided data all recorded a cash collection efficiency of greater than 80% for 05/06 financial year. Of the DMs that provided data the cash collection efficiency varied from 35% to 95% and of the LMs that provided data the cash collection efficiency varied from 50% to 98% for the same period.

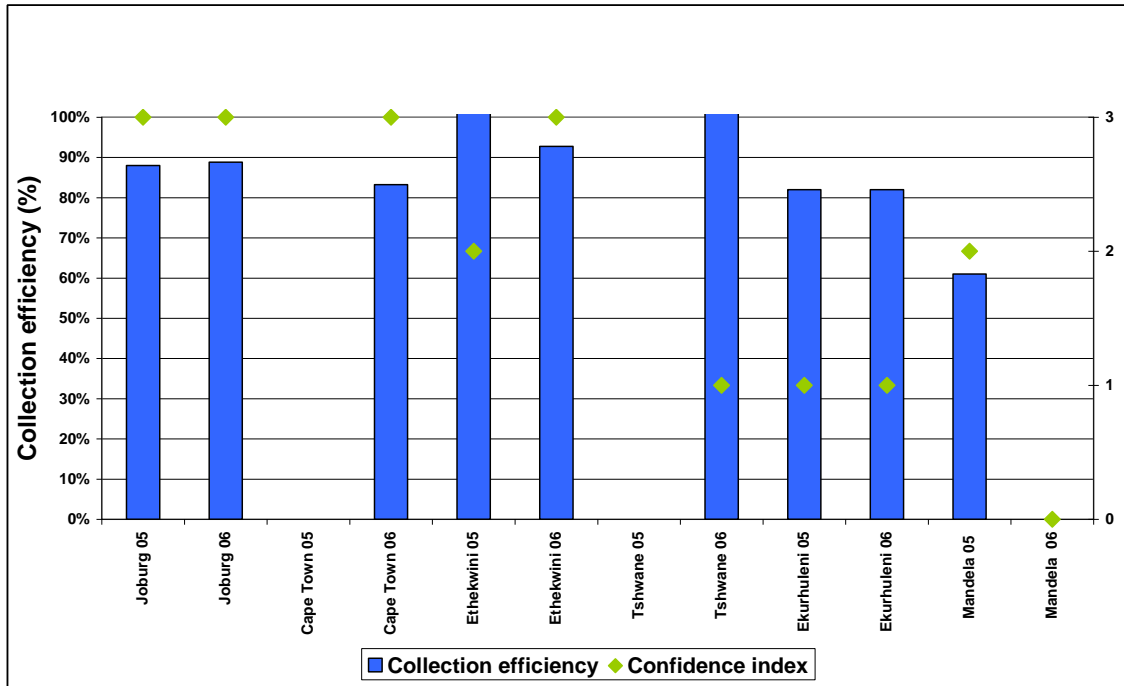


Figure 53: Cash collection efficiency in the Metros

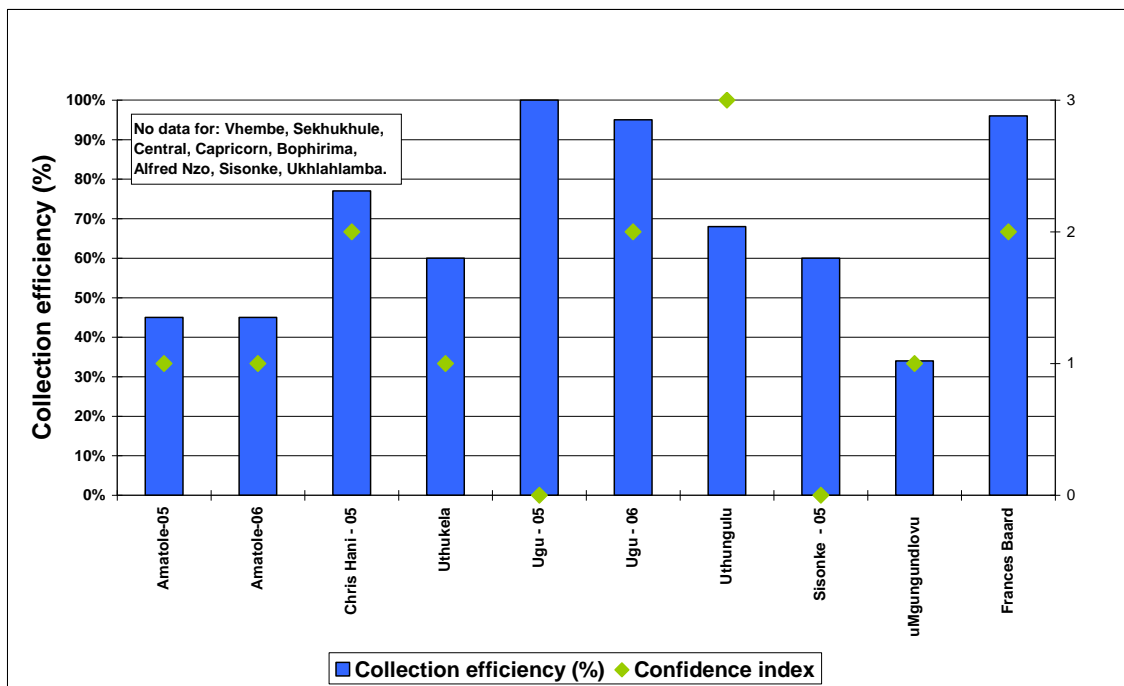


Figure 54: Cash collection efficiency in DMs

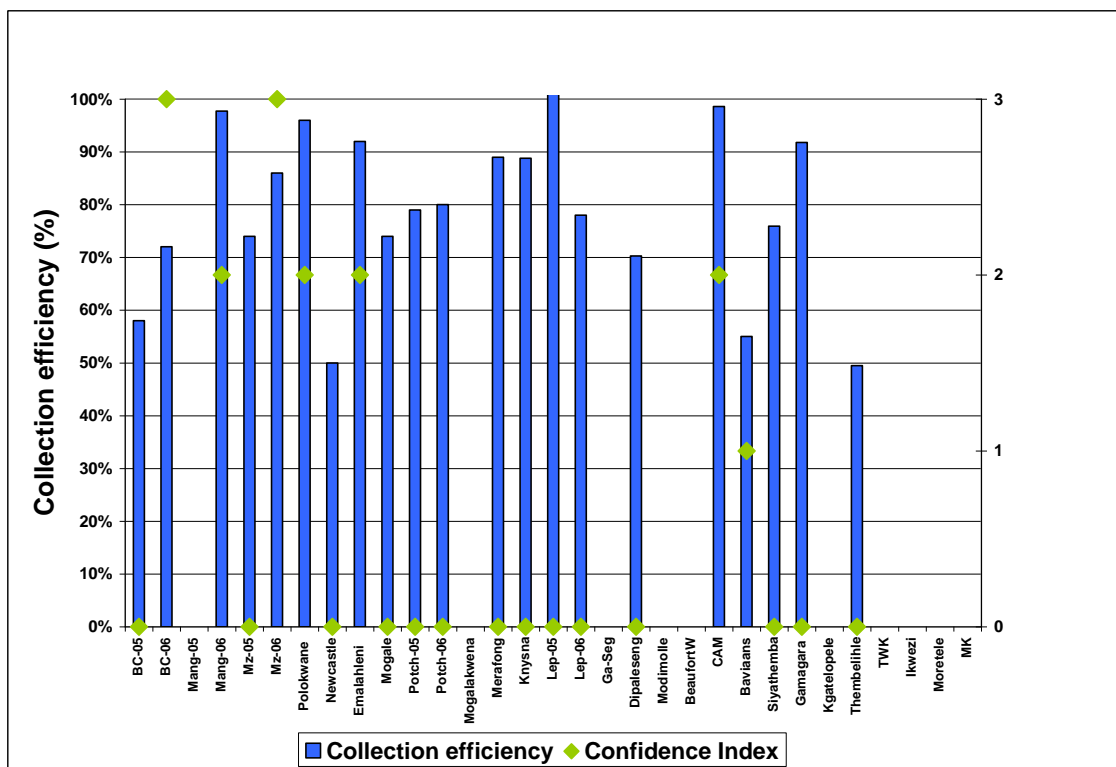


Figure 55: Cash collection efficiency in LMs

Implications

Municipalities should aim for, and achieve a cash collection efficiency of 95% or more. Lower levels than this threaten sustainability and/or indicate that the indigent’s or propoor policy is not appropriate or effective.

5.5.4 Debtor days

Definition

Definition:

The outstanding debt (after provisions) expressed as debtor days based on the billed water sales for the year

Formula:

The total customer debt (after provisions) divided by sales billed for the year multiplied by 365

Importance or significance

This is a measure of the financial management performance of the municipality in recovering water services debt.

Extent of reporting

1 of 6 Metros, 8 of 15 DMs and 17 of 26 LMs did not report on this indicator. Of the Metros 50% reflected that the data supplied had been audited, 13% of the DMs and 4% of LMs also indicated that the data provided had been audited.

Performance Analysis

For the Metros that provided data the values vary from 89 to 311 days, for the DMs the data varies from 15 to 360 days and for the LMs the range is from 13 to 342 days. It must be noted that for the DMs and LMs the confidence level (reliability) of the data provided is very low and thus the validity of the data must be questioned.

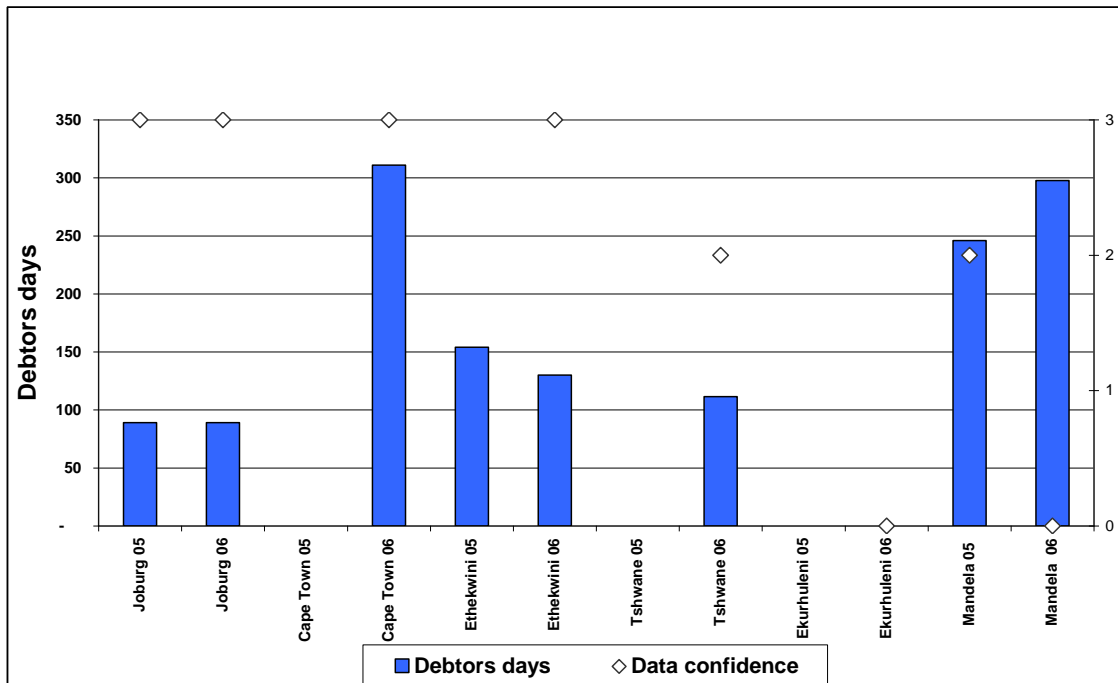


Figure 56: Debtor days for Metros

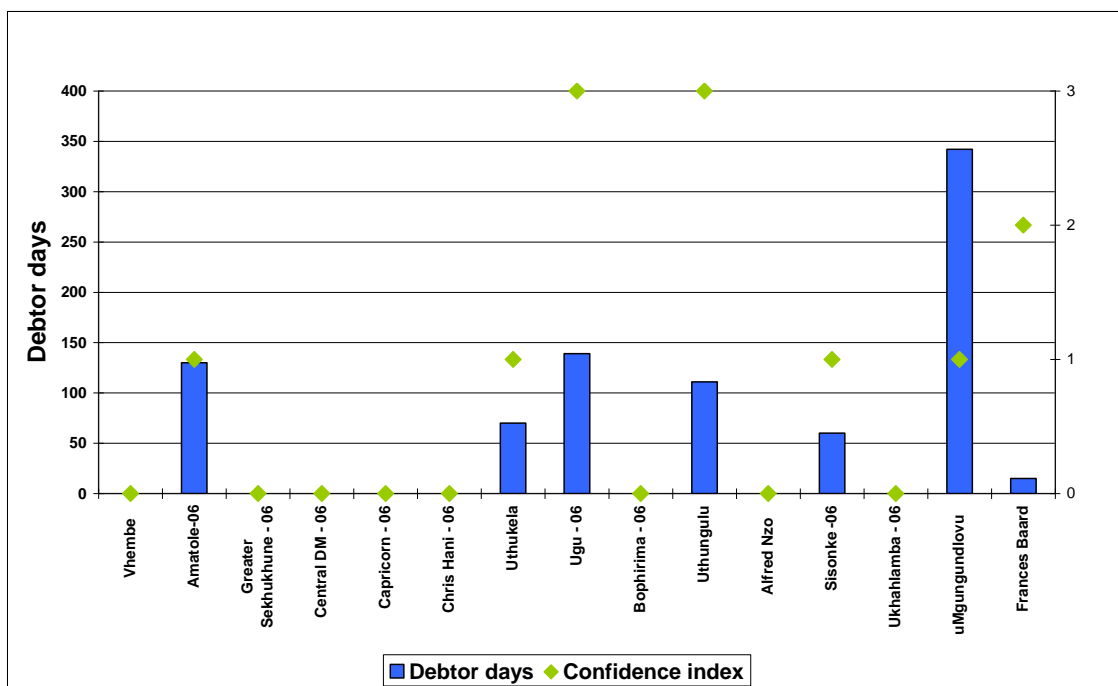


Figure 57: Debtor days for DMs

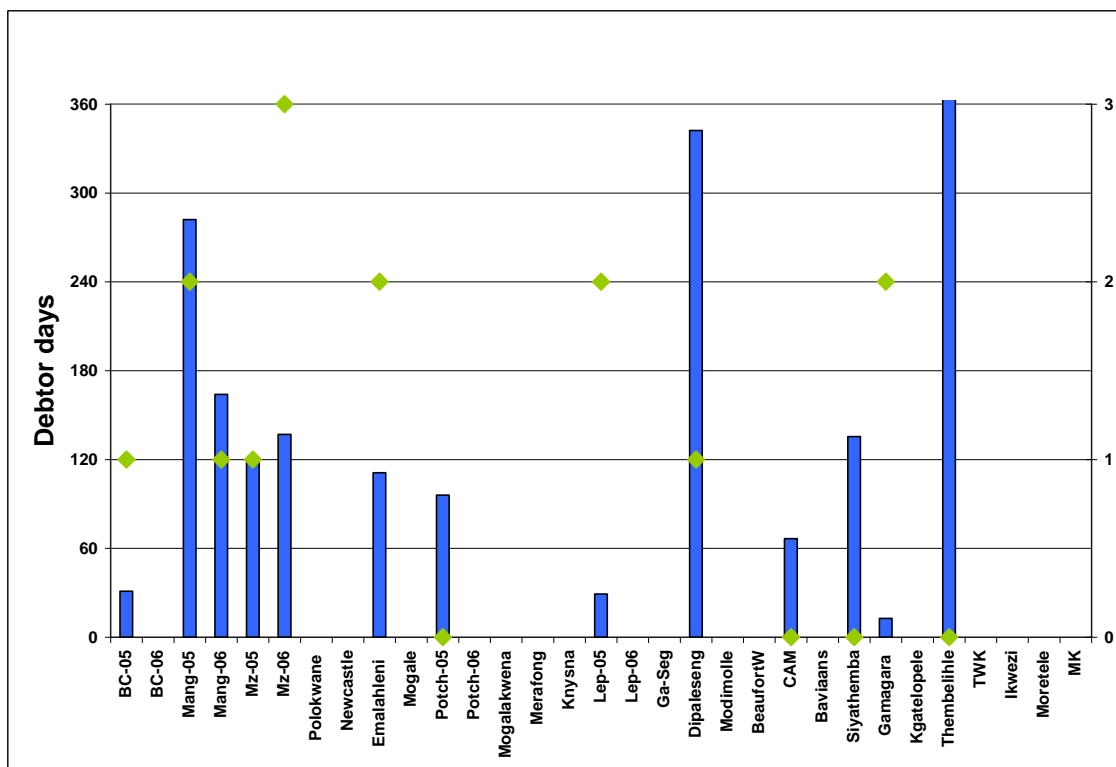


Figure 58: Debtor days for LMs

Implications

It must also be noted that good performance in the municipal environment is if the number of debtor days is less than 120 days. Municipalities should however aim for a debtor days of 90 days or less.

5.5.5 Self reliance

Definition

Definition:

The ratio of income from the sale of water to consumers to total operating expenses for water (including depreciation)

Formula:

The accrued income from water sales to consumers divided by the total operating expenditure for water including interest and depreciation

Importance or significance

This indicator also tests the financial viability and sustainability of the municipality as it measures the ratio of non-grant income to expenditure for the delivery of water services.

Extent of reporting

It is noted that only a few of the DMs and LMs could report on this KPI and that there was a large disparity in the scale of the business and it was decided to split the LM into those that were classified as secondary cities (B1) and the rest.

Performance Analysis

The data presented here shows both the cash collected and the operating expenditure. The indicators were inconsistently interpreted and hence the sustainability ratios are not shown as these would not be comparable.

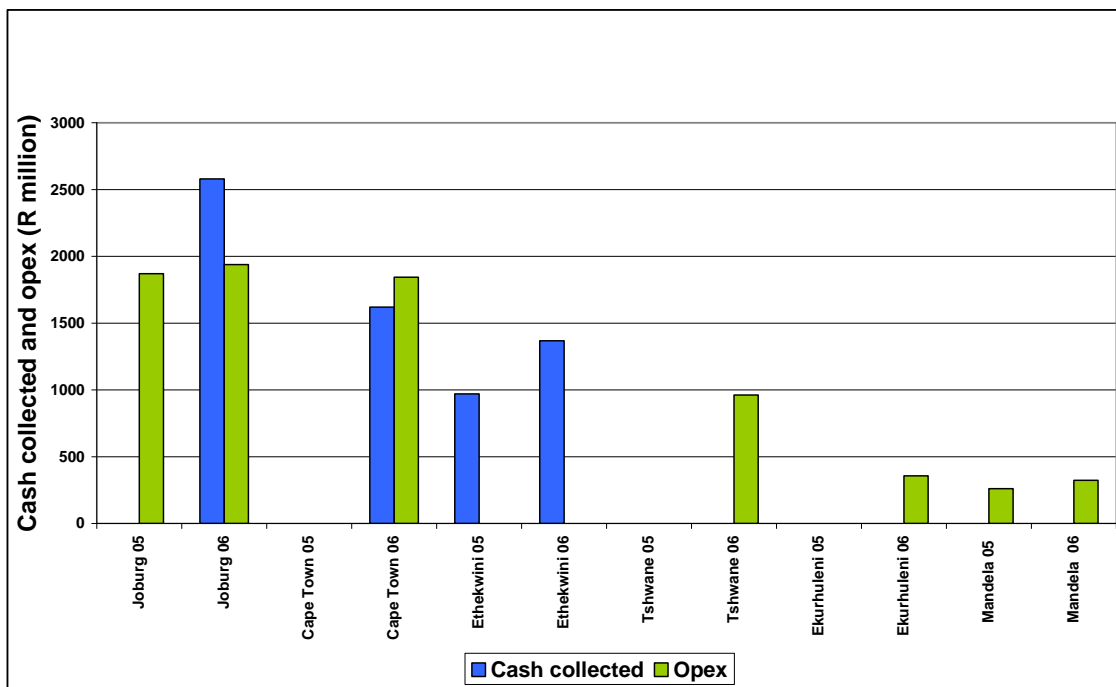


Figure 59: Cash collected and operating expenses for the Metros

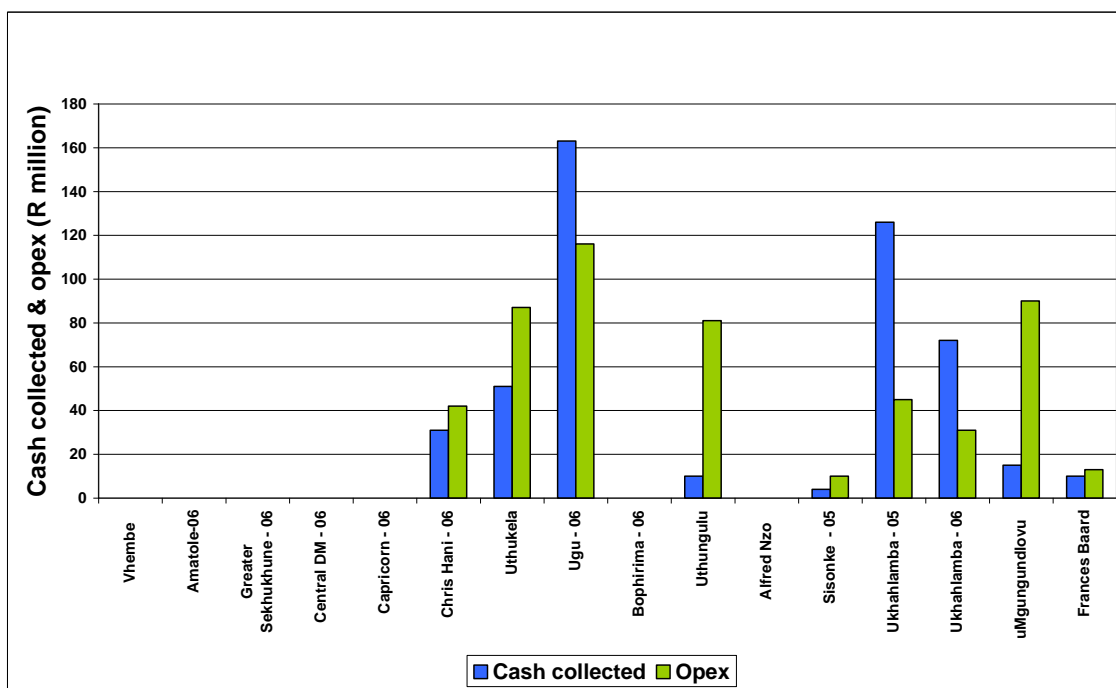


Figure 60: Cash collected and operating expenses for the DMs

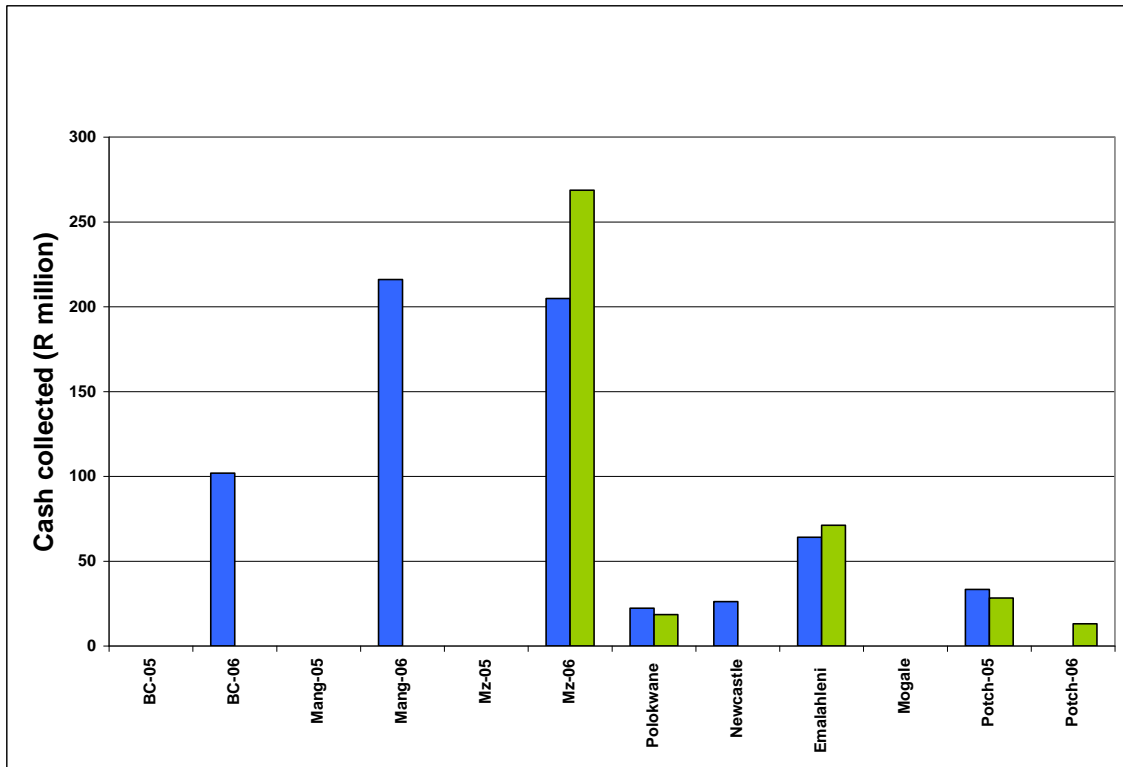


Figure 61: Cash collected and operating expenses for the Secondary Cities

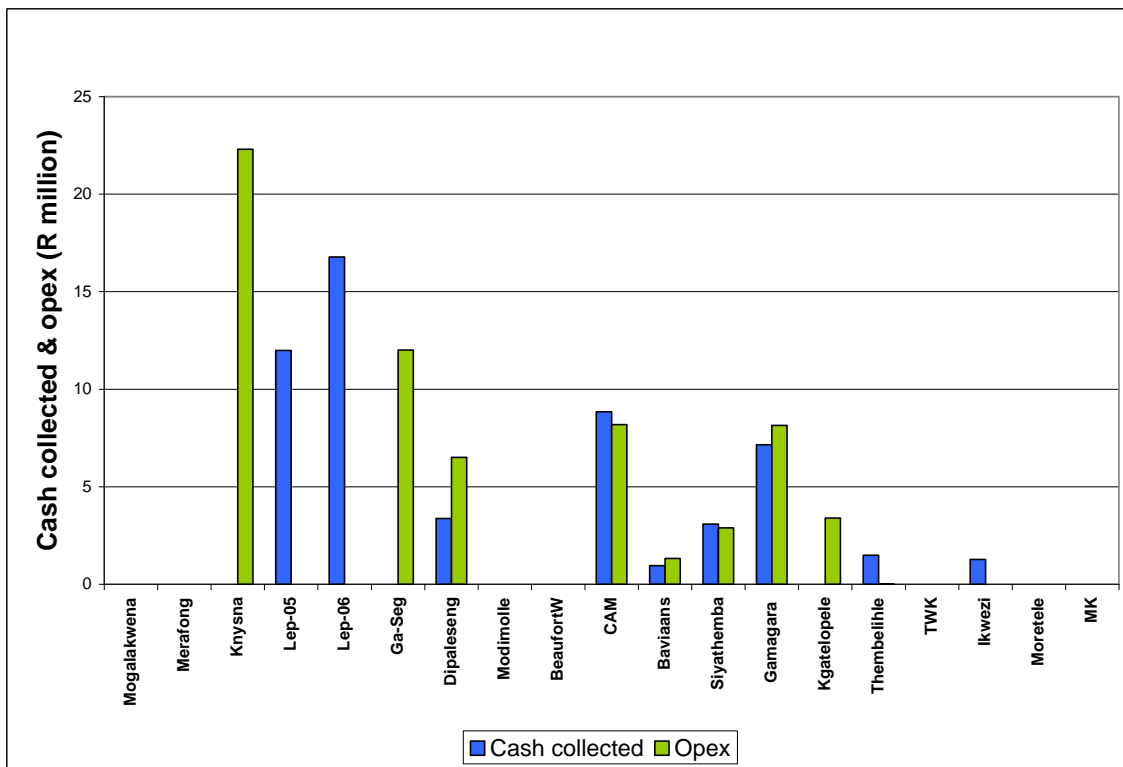


Figure 62: Cash collected and operating expenses for the LMs

Implications

More attention needs to be given to the financial data to ensure more robust and consistent reporting.

5.6 Asset management

The rationale behind focussing on Assets as a group of indicators lies in the fact that water services is generally capital intensive and sound management of assets is a fundamental prerequisite for good management of water services from both a service delivery perspective as well as from a sustainability perspective.

5.6.1 Audited water services asset register

Definition

Definition:

A water service asset register has been compiled, is up to date and has been audited. The requirements for the asset register are set out in the MFMA.

Formula:

A municipality must indicate the status of their asset register:

- Not developed
- In process
- Developed
- Up to date
- Audited

Importance or Significance

This indicator supports the Sector Targets in the Strategic Framework for Water Services, is a requirement of the MFMA and is a measure of good management practice.

Data sources

All WSAs must have an asset register to enable them to manage and account for the assets.

Extent of reporting

22 of the 48 participants provided data.

Performance Analysis

Of the Metros, DMs and LMs respectively, 83%, 47% and 29% are in the process of establishing an asset register (or already have one). This compares favourably with the results from the previous years benchmarking where only 25% of the participating WSAs had an up-to-date asset register. However these results, except for the Metros, still reflect generally a poor level of performance and non-compliance with the MFMA.

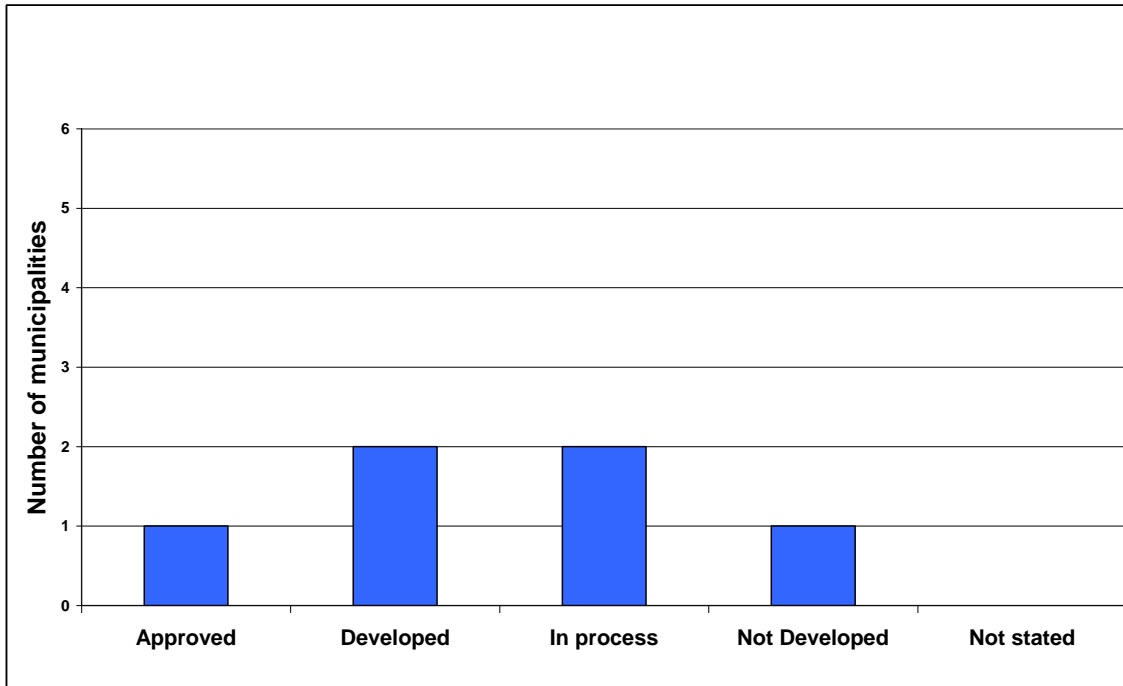


Figure 63: Status of asset registers for Metros

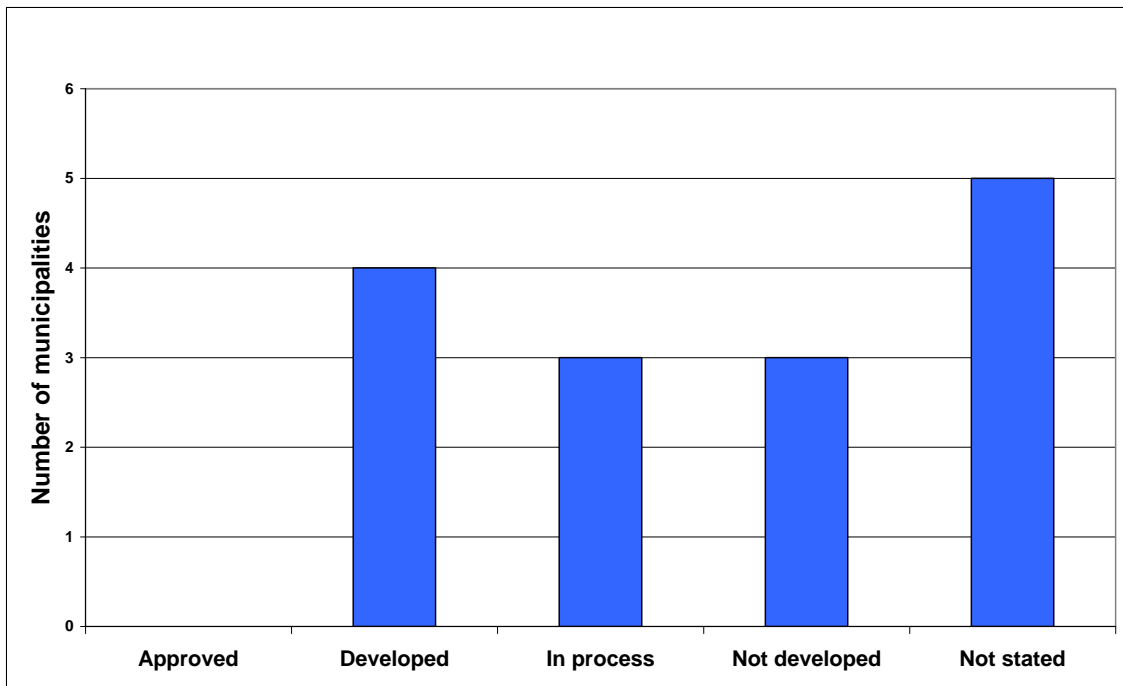


Figure 64: Status of asset registers in the DMs

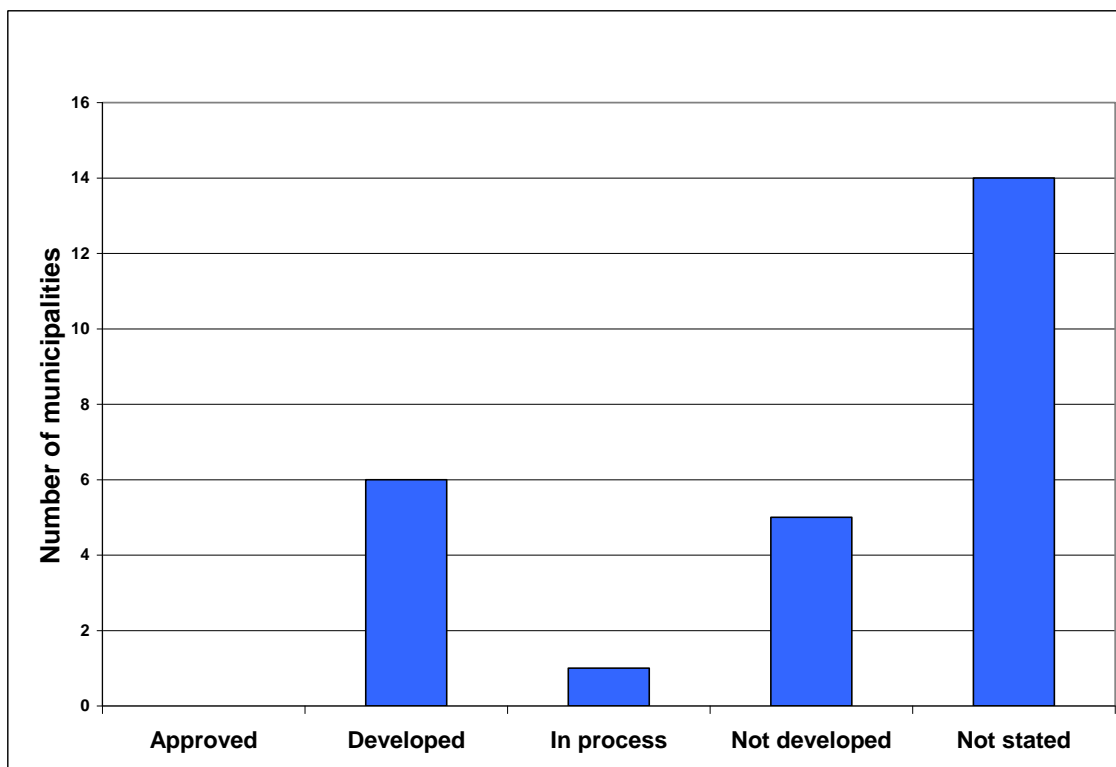


Figure 65: Status of asset registers in the LMs

Implications and recommendations

All WSAs must have a Council approved and audited asset register to support the sector goals of sustainable service delivery. To achieve this measure both DWAF, as the sector custodian, and National Treasury as the regulator of the MFMA must insist that all WSAs have Council approved and audited asset registers in place as a matter of urgency.

5.6.2 Asset management plan

Definition

Definition:

An asset management plan that has been developed and approved by the WSA (Council)

Formula:

A municipality must indicate the status of their asset management plan:

- Not developed
- In process
- Developed
- Approved

Importance or Significance

A Council approved asset management plan is a indicator of good management practices in the WSA. (Of course, a plan on its own is not sufficient. The plan must also be appropriate and be implemented.)

Data sources

An asset management plan helps the WSA to manage its assets in a sustainable and financially efficient manner by indicating when assets need to be refurbished and when assets need to be replaced, ensuring that the maximum benefit is obtained from any infrastructure investment.

Extent of reporting

26 of the 48 participants reported on whether they had an asset management plan.

Performance Analysis

The responses received for this indicator were similar to those received for the status of asset registers. For the Metros 83 % had asset management plans whereas 27% and 25% of the DMs and LMs has plans. The response shows a noticeable improvement from the previous years benchmarking where only 21% recorded having asset management plans in place. Again the DMs and LMs still reflect poor performance.

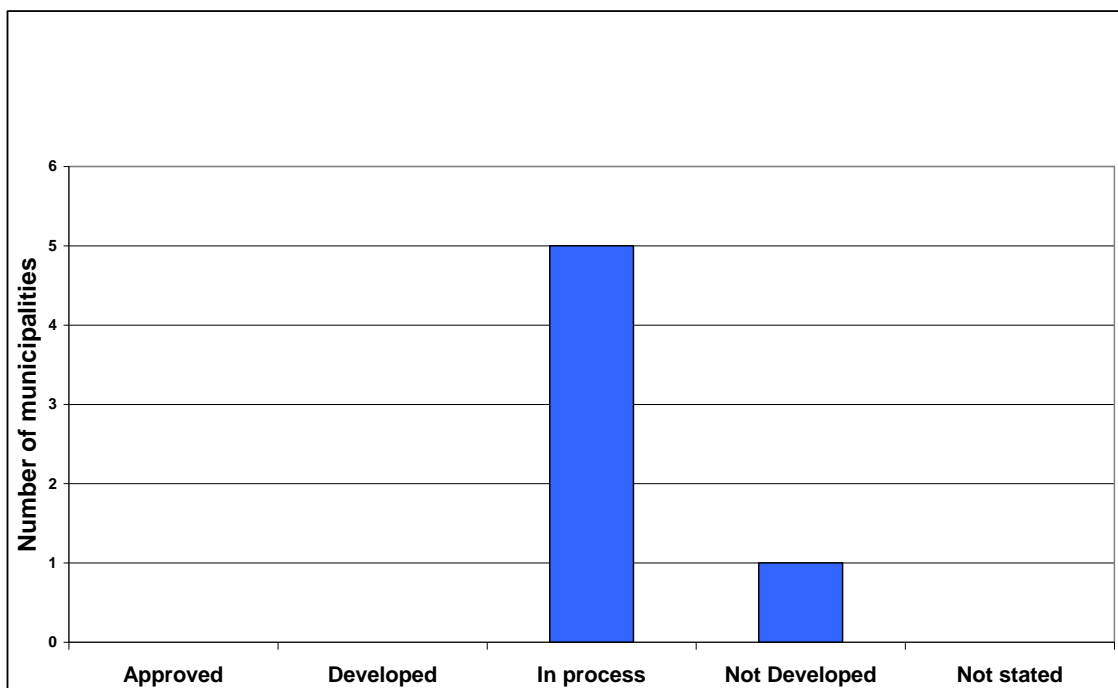


Figure 66: Status of asset management plans in the Metros

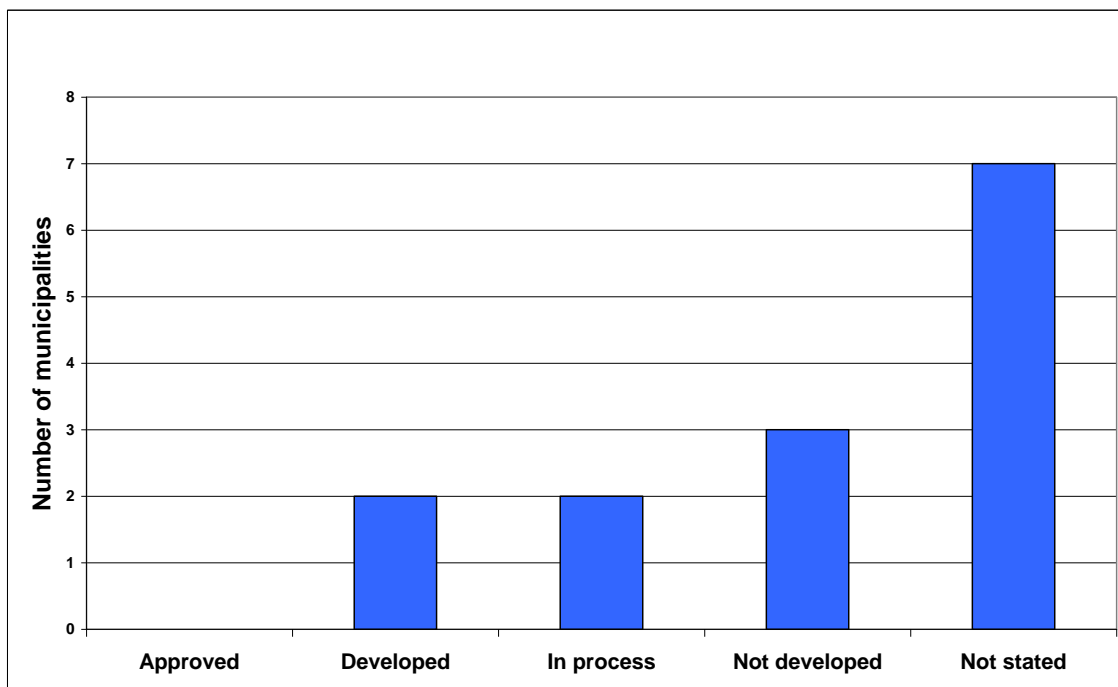


Figure 67: Status of asset management plans in the DMs

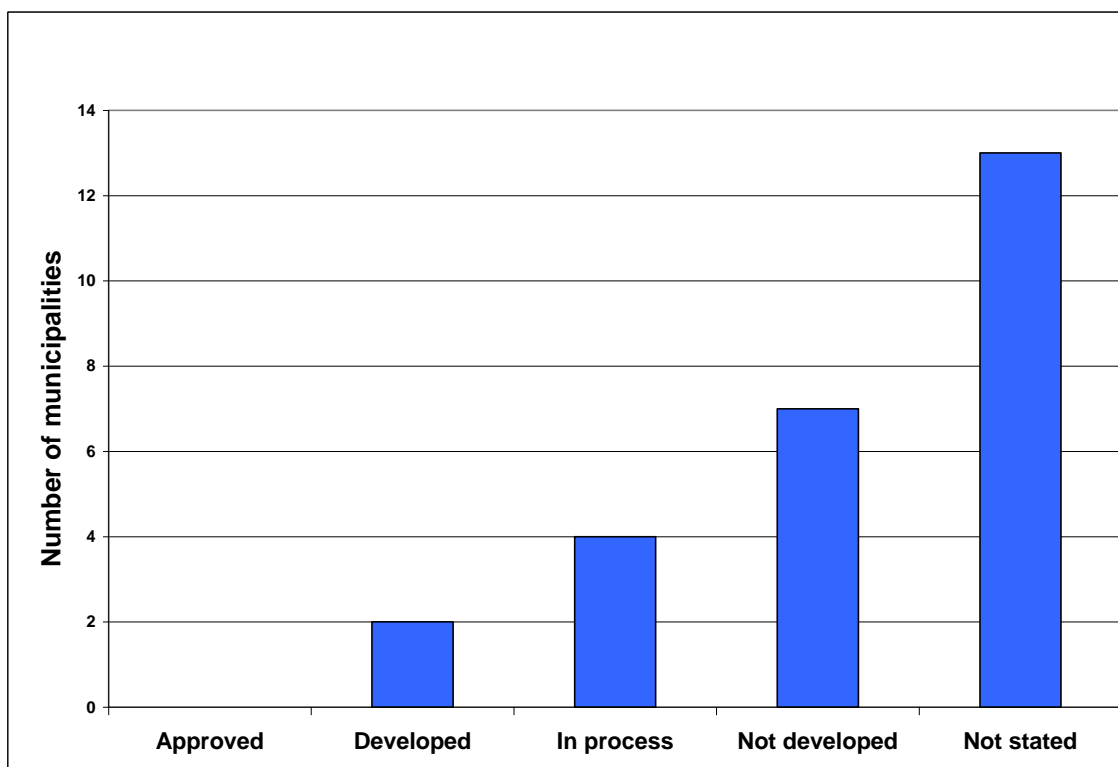


Figure 68: Status of asset management plans in the LMs

Implications and recommendations

The lack of performance on these indicators need not mean that asset management planning is not taking place but does pose the question as to the status and priority of asset management planning within the WSA.

5.6.3 Meter coverage

Definition

Definition:

The percentage of metered end-use connections in relation to the total number of end-use connections which should be metered (volume unrestricted connections).

Formula:

Total retail meters divided by the total number of volume unrestricted connections

Unrestricted connections:

Full pressure connections with or without meters including yard taps and connections with prepaid meters

Importance or Significance

Metering is essential in order to manage a network effectively. Without metering it is not possible to undertake water balances, to manage water losses and to provide accurate billing. This indicator arises out of a requirement in the Waters Services Act.

Data sources

Each municipality should maintain records of the number of water connections, the number of meters installed, and the status of the meters.

Extent of reporting

1 of 6 Metros, 2 of 15 DMs and 7 of 26 LMs did not report on the extent of meter coverage within their municipalities.

Performance Analysis

The Metros achieved an average meter coverage of 74% with only 1 Metro having audited data, the DMs 62% with a large number recording a data confidence score of 0 (not stated) and LMs 72% again with a large number recording a data confidence level of 0 (not stated).

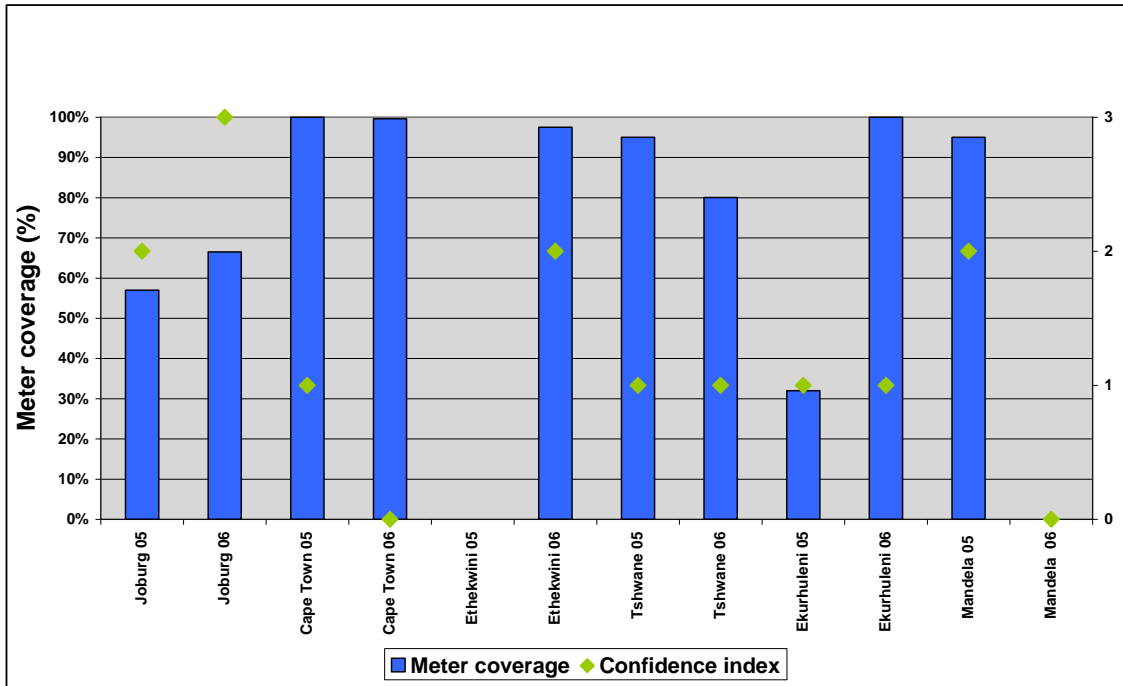


Figure 69: Meter coverage in the Metros

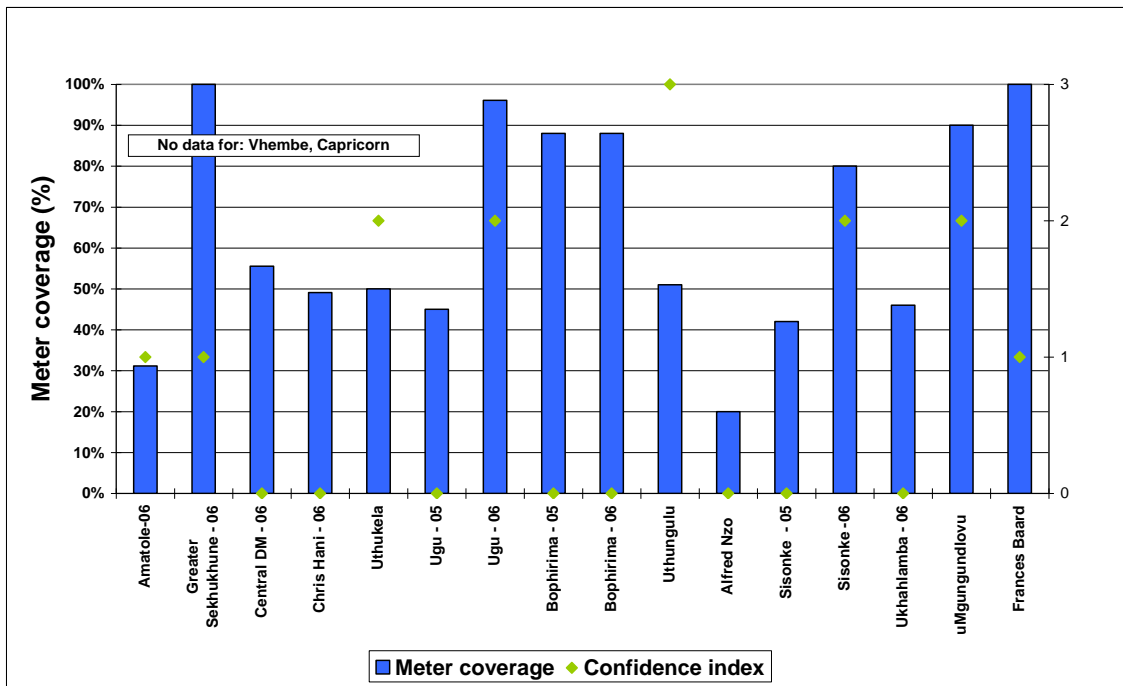


Figure 70: Meter coverage in the DMs

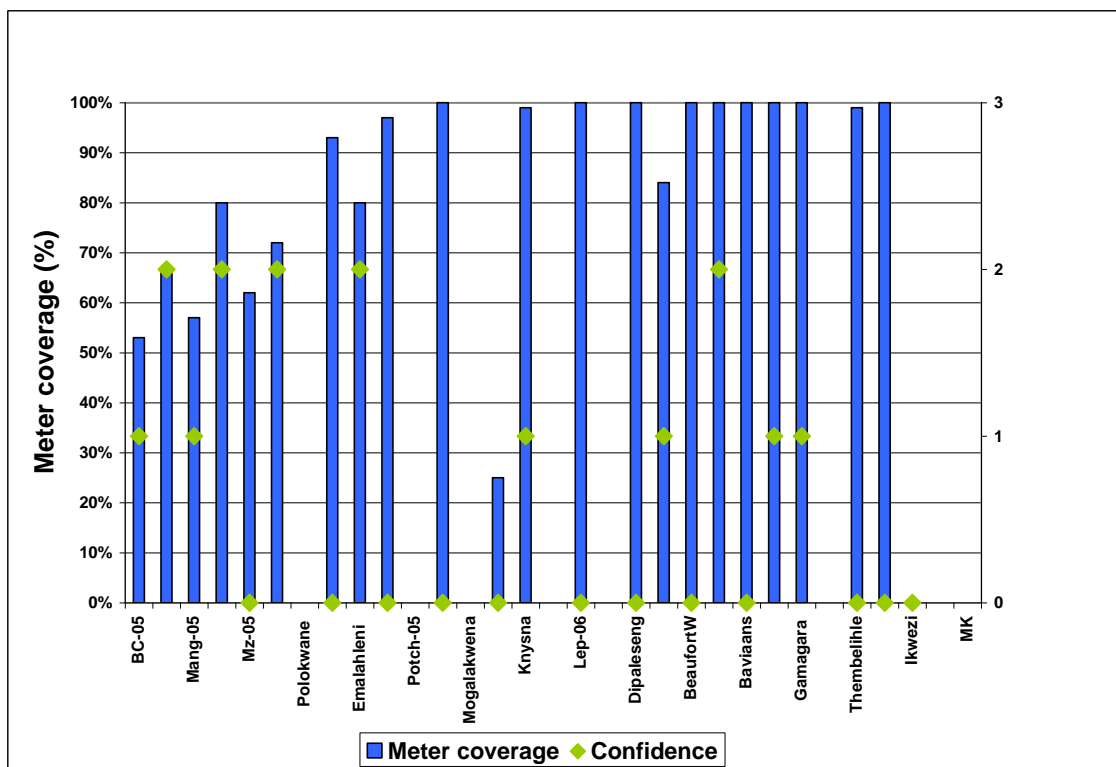


Figure 71: Meter coverage in the LMs

Implications and recommendations

Metering is a critical element of managing the service delivery of water and emphasis must be placed on the investment and maintenance of meters, for both bulk and domestic services.

5.6.4 Unaccounted-for water

Definition

Definition:

The volume of water supplied into the network less the volume of water accounted for divided by the volume of water supplied in to the network

It was suggested at the National Conference that the internationally accepted ILI methodology should be used as the current measure is simplistic and does not differentiate between actual losses and management losses. However, it is felt that not all municipalities are in a position to measure this indicator in a sophisticated way.

Importance or significance

Unaccounted-for water is a measure of the efficiency of the service delivery network as well as the effectiveness of the municipalities measurement, accounting and administrative systems and processes. The Water Services Act requires water service authorities to measure unaccounted for water and do water audits.

Data sources

To manage the water sector business a municipality must know how much water is being put into the network and how much it can account for.

Extent of reporting

28 of the 48 respondents reported on the extent of unaccounted-for water.

Reliability of data

Only 2 of the Metros and 1 LM could report data that was audited. The majority of the data sets were estimates or had a data confidence level of not stated.

Performance Analysis

The performances of those that responded varies from 18% to 35% unaccounted-for water for the Metros, 32% to 75% unaccounted-for water for the DMs and 4% to 62% unaccounted-for water for the LMs. Some of the results, at both ends of the performance scale should be questioned especially with the indicated levels of confidence (reliability) of the data.

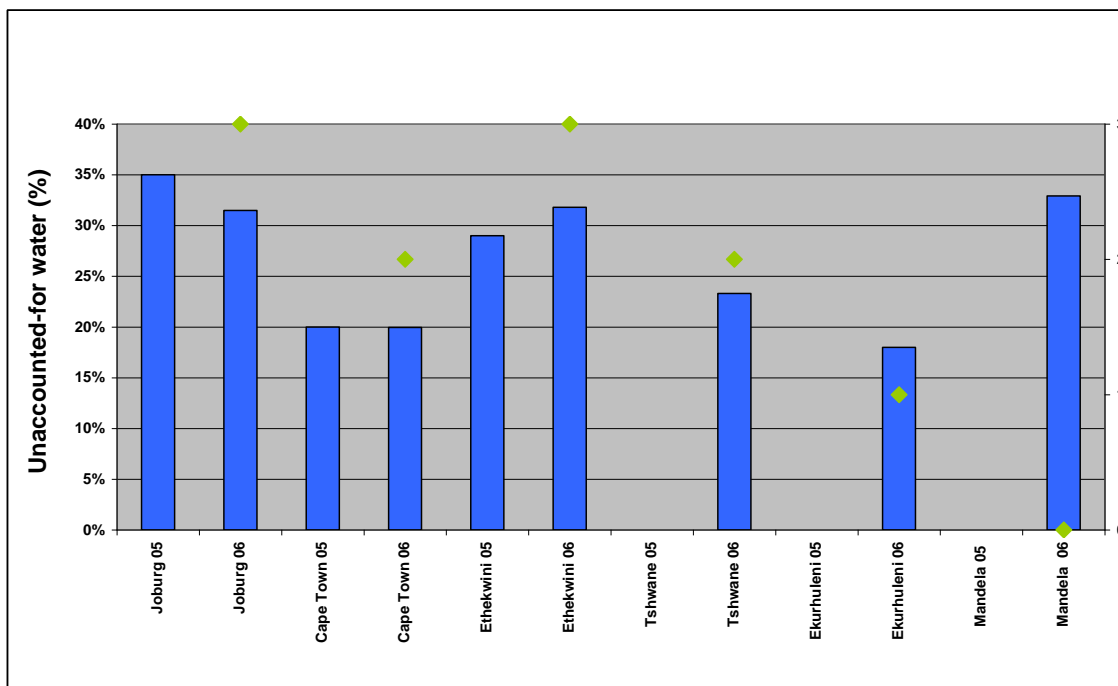


Figure 72: Unaccounted for water in the Metros

Implications and recommendations

The basis of measurement of this indicator must be improved over time as it is a critical indicator in terms of determining the viability and sustainability of service delivery.

5.7 Protection of the environment: Effluent discharge quality

5.7.1 Choice and significance of indicators

The following indicators relating to wastewater discharge were selected:

- Number of licensed wastewater treatment works: the number of works operating with a current license in relation to the total number of treatment works. That is, are the treatment works regulated in terms of a license.
- Treatment works compliance. The number of treatment works which comply with licence conditions compared to the total number operated by the municipality.
- Effluent monitoring system. The present of a compliant wastewater discharge monitoring system.
- Wastewater treatment compliance. The flow-weighted percentage of samples compliance with the relevant discharge standards.

These indicators arise from the Water Services Act.

5.7.2 Licensed treatment works

Definition

Definition:

The percentage of wastewater treatment works which have a current and valid license.

Significance

In terms of the Water Services Act, all treatment works above a certain size (2 Ml/day) need to be licensed according to standards as defined in the license conditions. Others only need to operate in terms of a permit.

Analysis

The relationship between the total number of works and licensed treatment works is show in the graphs below.

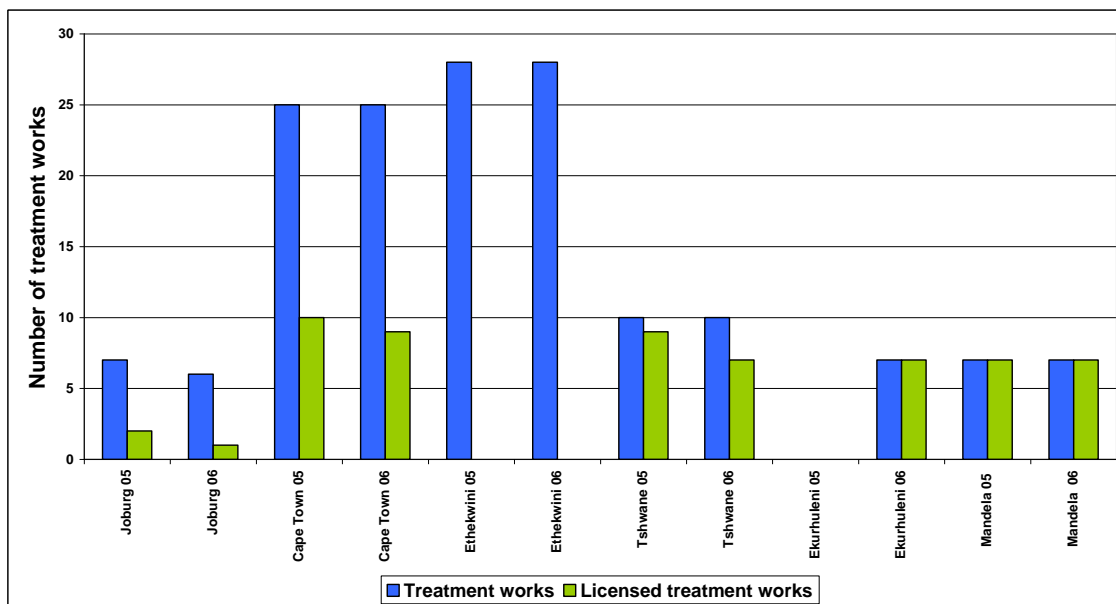


Figure 75: Number of treatment works and number of licensed treatment works for the Metros

Not all treatment works in the metropolitan areas are operating in terms of a current licence. This should be a cause for concern. Data for DMs and LMs is incomplete as shown below.

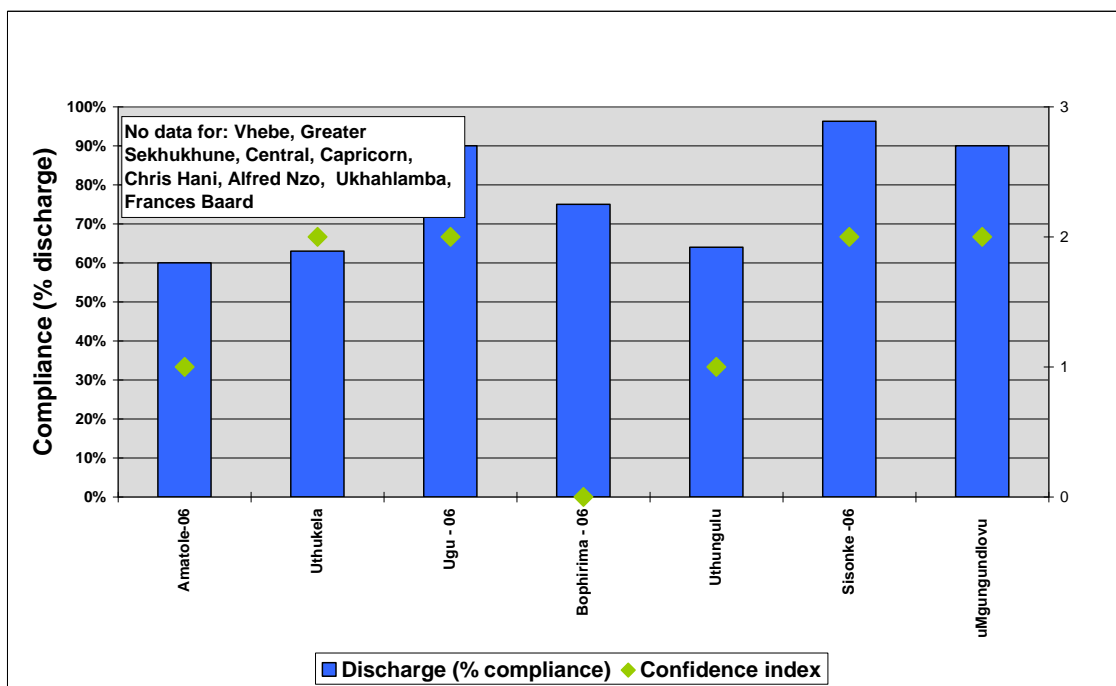


Figure 76: Number of treatment works and number of licensed treatment works for the DMs

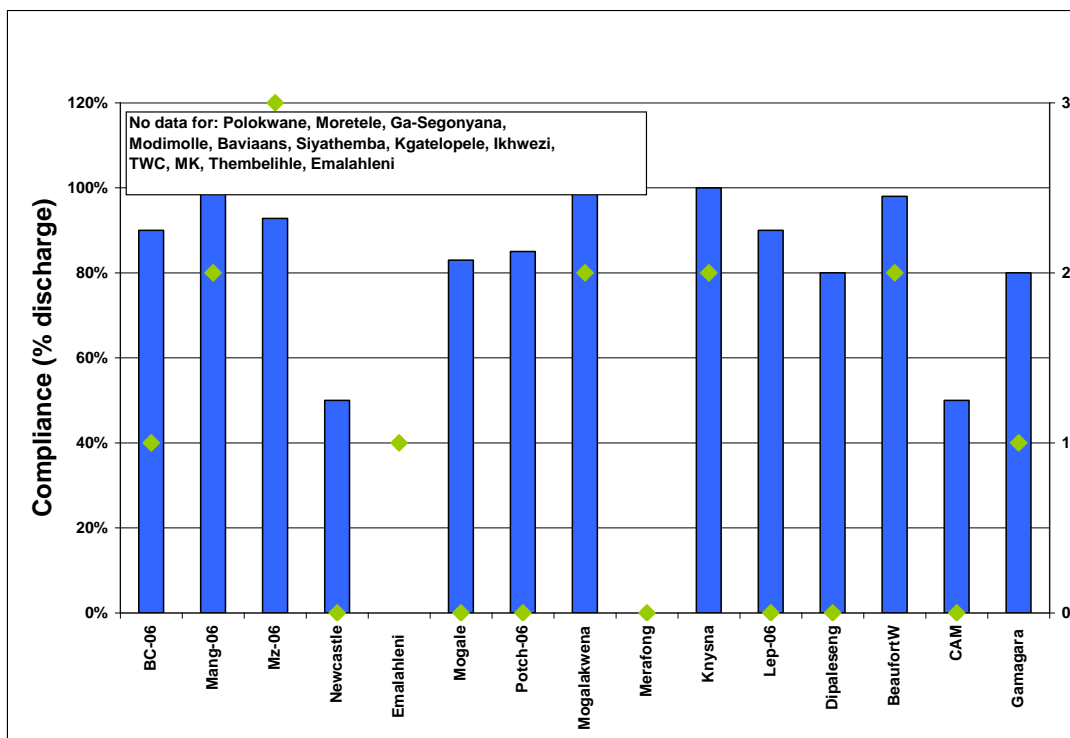


Figure 77: Number of treatment works and number of licensed treatment works for the LMs

Implications

The question must, in future, take into account the size of the treatment works and more effort must be placed in ensuring complete returns. This is data that should be known by each municipality.

5.7.3 Treatment works compliance

Definition

Definition:

The percentage of treatment facilities that comply with the required output quality requirements at least 97 % of the time.

97 % compliance:

More than 97 % of samples meet or exceed standards for each parameter

Formula:

The number of treatment works that comply (at least 97 % of the time) divided by the total number of treatment works

Interpretation

This indicator gives an indication of the proportion of treatment works that comply with the discharge standards. It may be the case that a municipality has 2 large WWTWs and 1 small one and it is the small one that does not comply. The indicator would show 66% compliance, whereas in reality overall compliance is higher when considered on a flow-weighted basis. A flow-weighted indicator is also measured (see below).

Analysis

Data on individual treatment works compliance was very sparse and so it not reported here.

5.7.4 Effluent monitoring system

Definition

Definition:

The WSA has instituted a programme of effluent discharge quality monitoring programme in accordance with Nationally defined minimum standards.

The following criteria must be satisfied:

- Effluent discharge standards are clearly defined at each discharge point,
- Samples are taken as per the relevant standard,
- Samples are tested in accredited laboratory,
- Samples are recorded and stored,
- Results are reported.

Formula:

The municipality must indicate if it has a full (meets all the requirements), partial (meets some requirements) or has no (does not undertake routine monitoring) programme in place

Interpretation

The interpretation should be relatively straightforward. There was discussion at the conference on the necessity of the use of an accredited laboratory versus an accredited testing process.

Analysis

All Metros, 5 of the DMs and 9 of the LMs have a fully compliant effluent monitoring system in place. Three of the DMs and 5 of the LMs have a partial effluent monitoring system in place and 9 of the DMs and 11 of the LMs have either no system in place or did not state whether they had a system or not.

Implications

Not all participating municipalities have a compliant effluent monitoring process in place (and some had no process in place at all). Support for ensuring these systems are in place should be regarded as a priority.

5.7.5 Incidence of sample compliance

Definition

Definition:

The percentage of samples taken in monitoring effluent quality that met or exceeded the minimum requirements (flow-weighted by discharge point)

Supporting standards:

General and special standards are defined,
 License conditions may stipulate specific standards to be met by a particular treatment works.

Formula:

The sum of the samples passing divided by the samples taken multiplied by the flow and the result divided by the total flow.

Interpretation

This indicator is calculated as a flow-weighted average across treatment works in the area and across parameters. Evidence as to how the indicator was calculated (as requested) was not provided consistently. Therefore, there is some doubt that this indicator has been consistently applied.

Extent of reporting

Reporting on this important indicator was incomplete.

Analysis

If the data supplied is reliable, then there is considerable concern as to the performance of wastewater treatment works in South Africa (see graphs below).

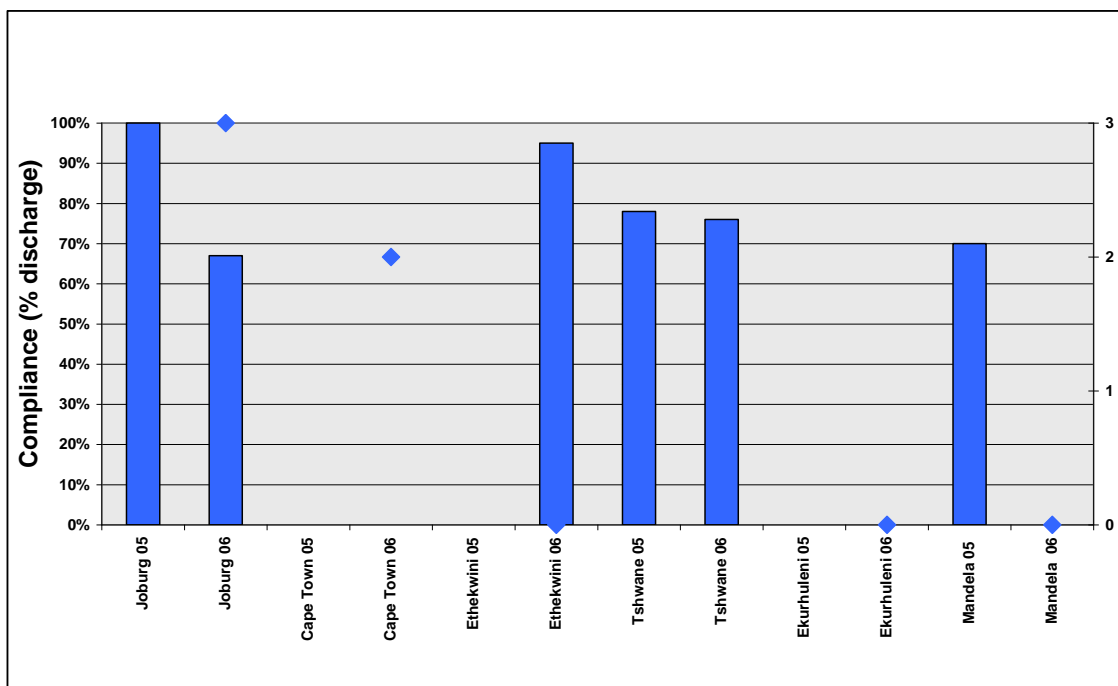


Figure 78: WWT compliance for the Metros

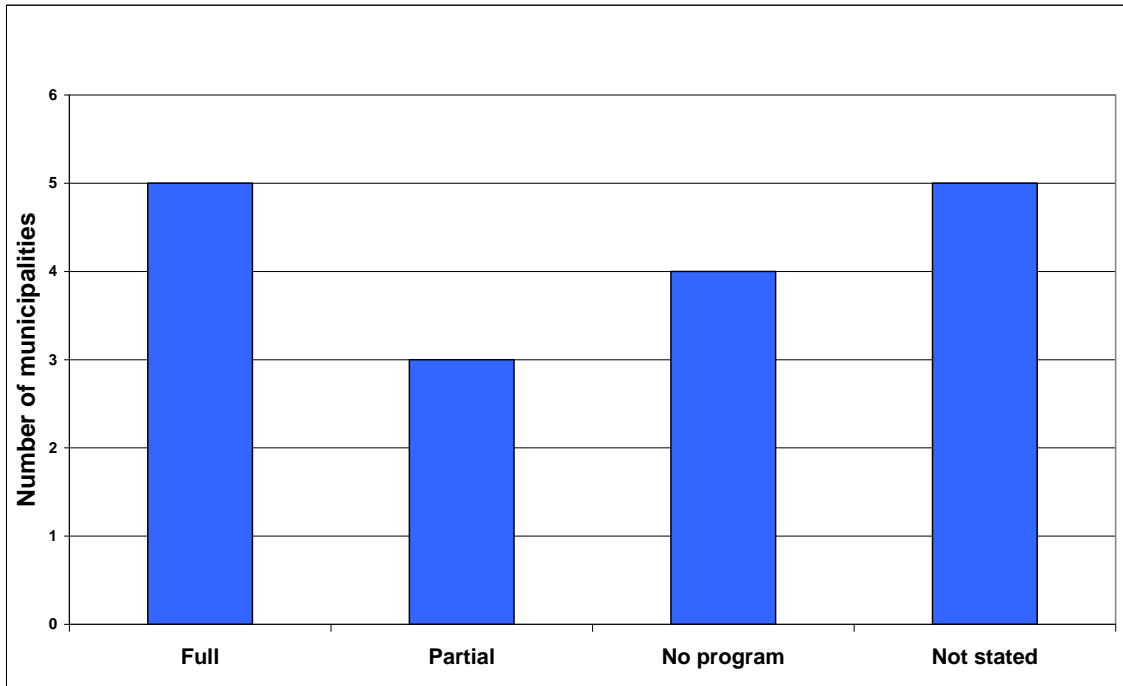


Figure 79: WWT compliance for the DMs

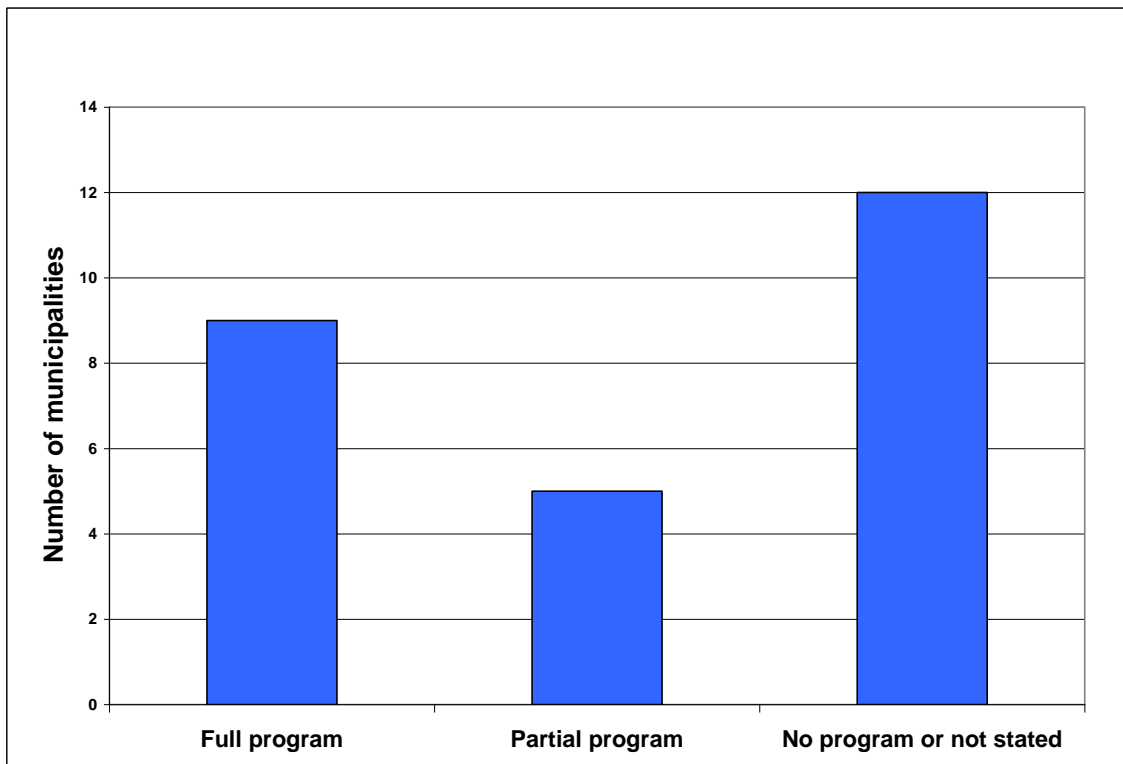


Figure 80: WWT compliance for the LMs

Implications

Concerted effort to improve the performance of wastewater treatment works across municipalities in South Africa is warranted.

6 Assessment of performance

This sections assesses the leading municipalities against selected criteria

6.1 Data Reliability

Definition

The highest average level of confidence in the data supplied.

Results

The following WSAs emerged as being the highest in each of their categories with regard to data reliability:

- Metro: Johannesburg: 2.5
- District: Ugu: 2.2
- Local: Msunduzi: 2.3

6.2 Data Completion

Definition

The highest number of data fields supplied.

Results

The following WSAs emerged as being the highest in each of their categories with regard to data reliability:

- Metro: Tshwane: 98%
- District: Uthukela: 98%
- Local: Msunduzi: 98%

6.3 Best overall performance

Methodology

The following methodology was used to assess the best overall performing WSAs.

Five areas were assessed, each with a weight of 10:

1. Access to basic services
2. Drinking water quality
3. Effluent quality
4. Asset management

5. Finances

Adequate data on human resources was not available.

Their performance was calculated as follows:

- Access to basic services (maximum 10 points)
 - Water % access x 5
 - Sanitation % access x 5
- Drinking water quality (maximum 10 points)
 - Full monitoring system (5); partial system (2.5), no system (0)
 - Ecoli sample failure: < 5% 2.5, < 0.1% 5
- Effluent quality (maximum 10 points)
 - Full monitoring system (5); partial system (2.5), no system (0)
 - Flow weighted sample compliance: > 80% 2.5, > 95% 5
- Asset management (maximum 10 points)
 - metering % x 2.5
 - $(1 - \text{UfW}\%) \times 2.5$
 - Asset management plan developed (1.25) and approved (2.5)
 - Asset register in place (1.25) and approved (2.5)

Comment: If a municipality is unable to provide data on an indicator, then it is scored zero on this indicator. Hence, this performance assessment measures the ability to provide data in addition to performance. The measure does not take into account the accuracy of the data supplied.

Results

Best overall performance:

- Metro: Johannesburg
- District: Ugu
- Mangaung

Spider diagrams for each are shown below:

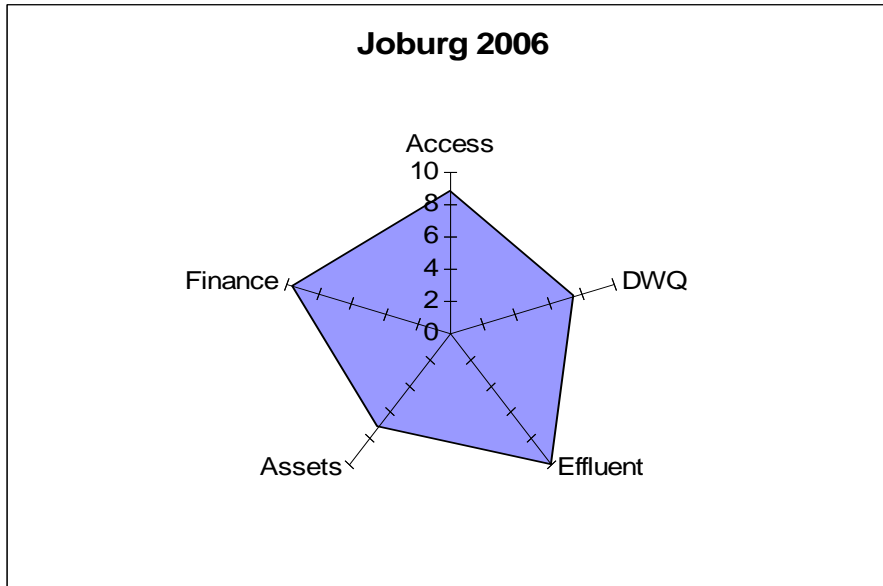


Figure 81: Overall performance for Joburg

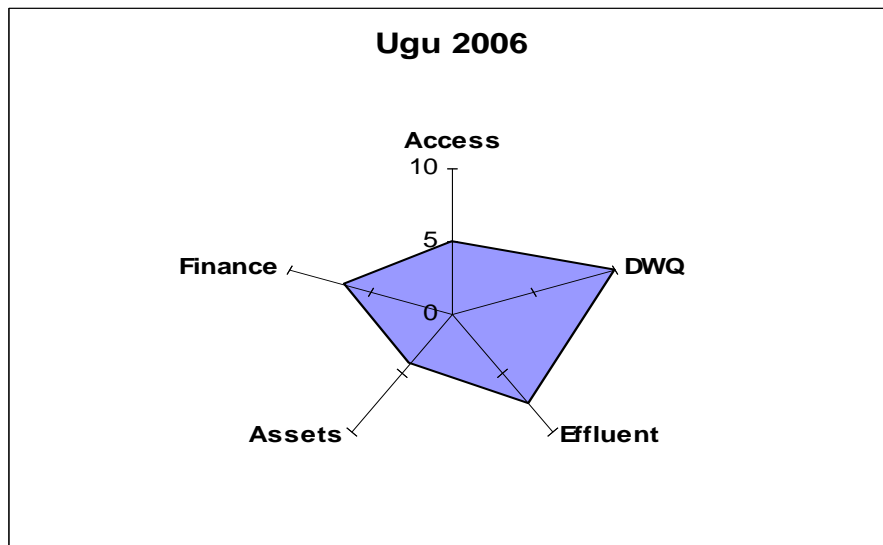


Figure 82: Overall performance for Ugu

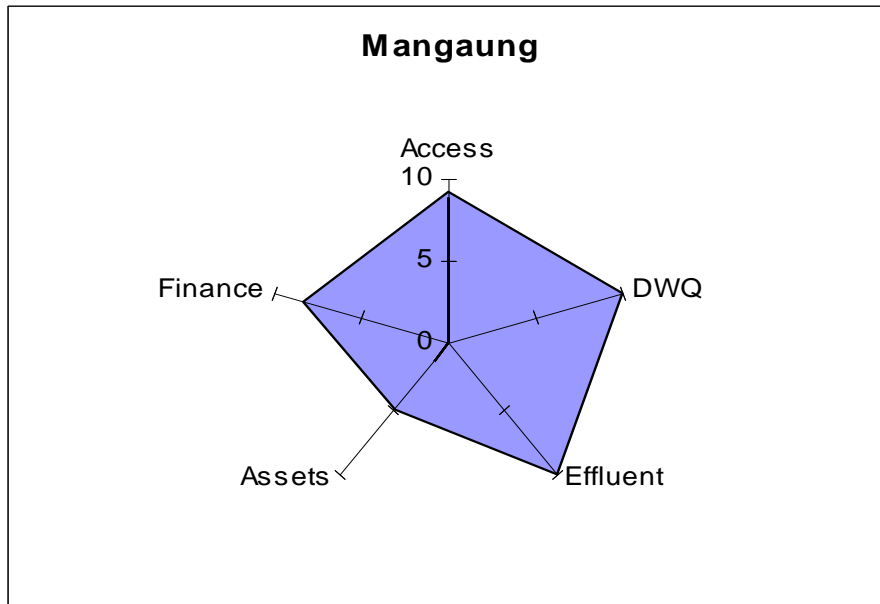


Figure 83: Overall performance for Mangaung

Comparative performance data for the municipalities is given in the graphs below.

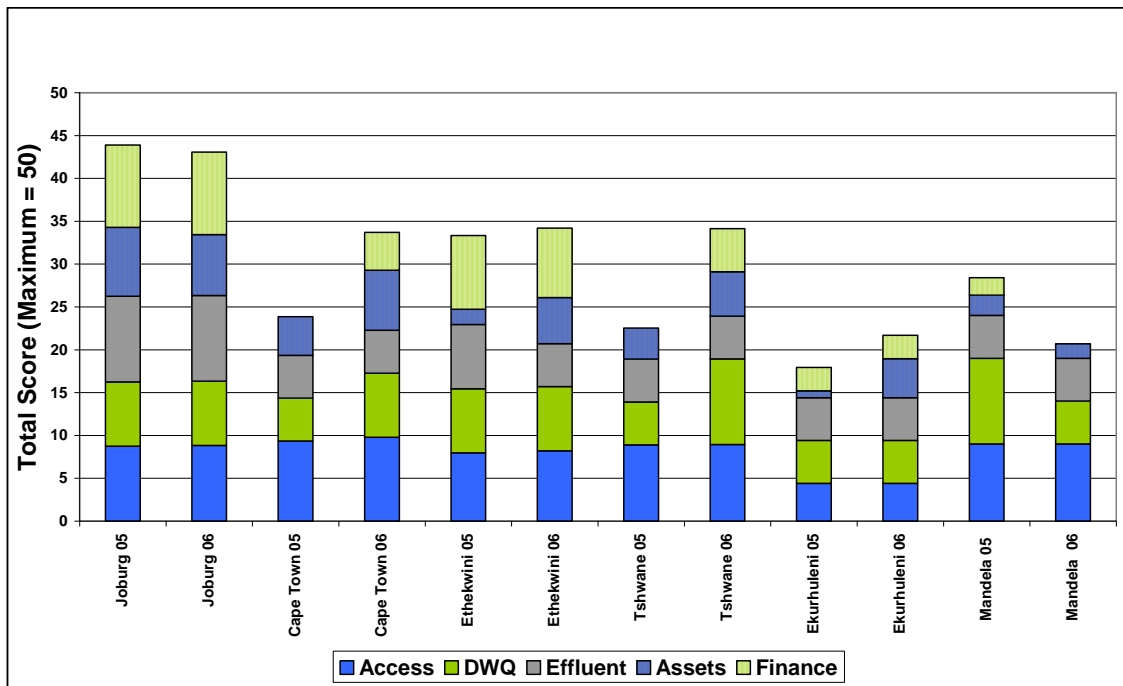


Figure 84: Overall performance assessment - Metros

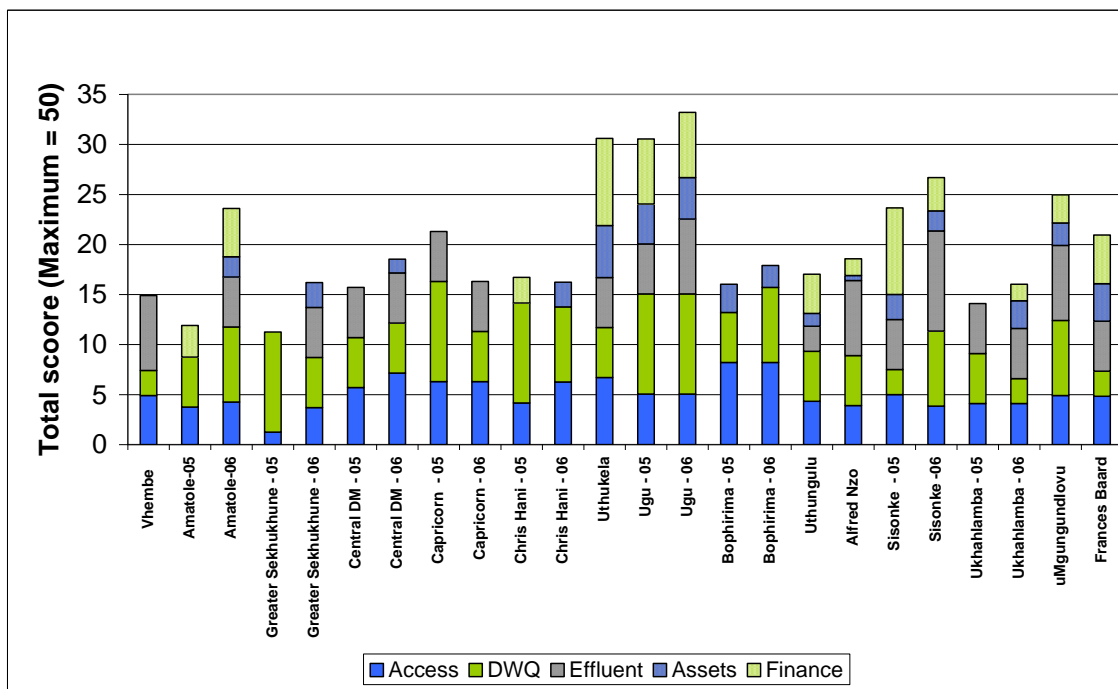


Figure 85: Overall performance assessment - LMs

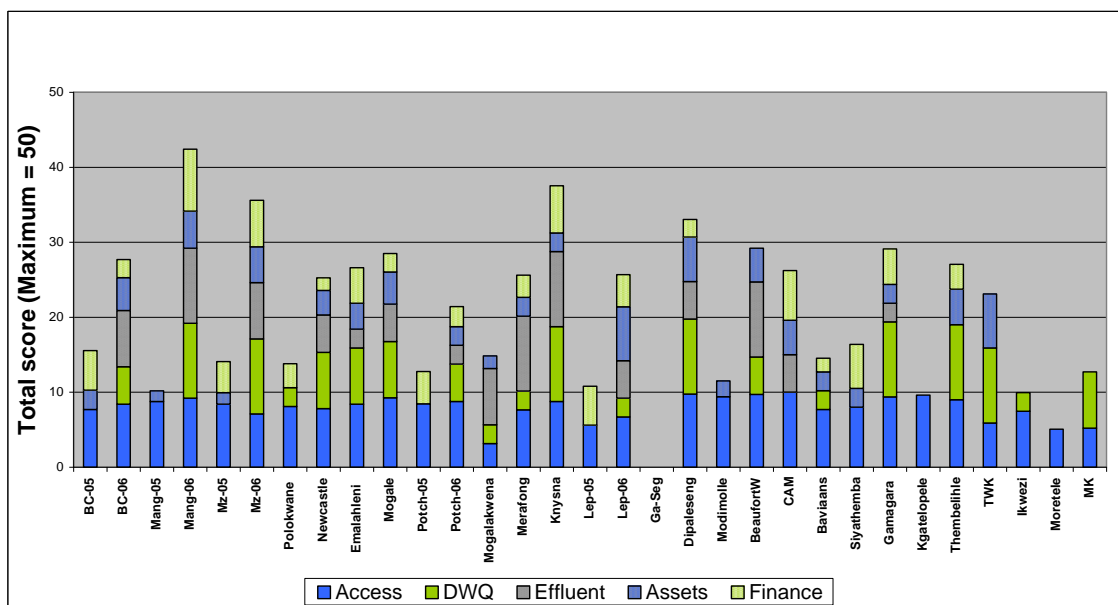


Figure 86: Overall performance assessment - LMs

7 Annual Benchmarking Conference

The Annual Benchmarking Conference was held in Buffalo City from 13 to 15 February 2007. The purpose of the conference was to present the outcomes of the benchmarking process as well as facilitate feedback and lesson-sharing from municipalities and other practitioners in the sector.

7.1 Delegates

A total of 101 delegates attended the conference. The breakdown of delegates was as follows:

- 8 from Metros
- 19 from DMs
- 19 from LMs
- 4 from Water Boards
- 21 from DWAF
- 9 from SALGA,
- 3 from WRC, and
- 21 from Private Companies.

7.2 Conference overview

The first day was dedicated to presentations and discussions of outcomes of the benchmarking process using the compulsory set of national regulatory performance indicators and additional selected indicators. The second day was dedicated to information sharing with other practitioners presenting on various key issues pertinent to the water services sector. It consisted of two parallel panel sessions on improving water services.

The first day started off with the opening address made by Ronnie McKenzie from WRP focusing on non-revenue water losses. The presentation drew parallels between South Africa and other countries in how water losses were addressed. More importantly, it addressed approaches to reducing water losses to set the scene for the rest of the conference. This was followed by a presentation providing an overview of the benchmarking process and defining the key performance indicators.

After lunch two presentations on the benchmarking indicator outcomes took place in two breakaway sessions, one on the regulatory performance indicators and the other on the internal management indicators. The regulatory performance indicator session was presented by Rolfe Eberhard and the session on the internal management indicators by Chris Schmidt. Both these sessions were interactive and audience participation was encouraged.

The second day started off with a report back on the discussions held in the plenary sessions on the benchmarking indicator outcomes and was followed by two parallel sessions on improving water services. The first panel included presentations by DWAF on waste water treatment and drinking water quality by Allestair Wensley, a presentation by Neil Macleod (eThekweni Metro representing the City Water Managers' Forum) on benchmarking in the Cities, a presentation by Bongani Dumisa on the SAAWU benchmarking project and a presentation by Bheka Zondi of uMkhanyakude District Municipality representing the District Water Managers Forum on peer review in district WSAs.

The second panel consisted of the following:

- State of community consultations by Mandla Msibi (Sigodi Mara Martin)
- Raising citizen's voice by Bongiwe Msane (DWAF)
- The efficient use of domestic water in South Africa by Dave Still.

- Status of WSA financing by Gillian Sykes (PDG), and
- Asset Management by Nino Manus (DWAf).

The rest of the day was dedicated to lessons learnt from the benchmarking process and an evaluation of the process.

7.3 Feedback from delegates

This section provides delegates' inputs during the plenary and breakaway discussion sessions as well as comments on highlights and ways to improve the process.

7.3.1 Regulatory focus

Access

Definition of household

This is left to the municipality to define; with the hope to converging on best practice over time. (This is beyond scope of study.)

Definition of access

It was noted that the access definition is only partial at present (refers to the availability of the facility only and not the continuity and sustainability of the service).

Access and informal settlements

- There was a suggestion to separate out backlog reporting between backlogs relating to informal settlements and formal backlogs in urban settlements.
- There was a suggestion that municipality make use of the peer networks to learn about innovations taking place in municipalities with respect to meeting the backlogs, especially as these relate to sanitation in informal urban settlements.

Chemical toilets

These are considered to be part of the backlog as they are only a temporary (and expensive) solution.

Drinking water quality

There was a request for an additional indicator on the response to sample failure incidents. It was noted that too few accredited labs exist. There is a need to explore the possibility of accepting an accredited methodology to be used for testing of samples, and not the need for an accredited laboratory. It was noted that the reporting of sample failure statistics may be too simplistic. There is a need to be more sophisticated in this regard if this is practical and if such data is widely available.

Wastewater discharge

It was noted that WWT works less than 2 Ml/day require a permit but not a license. This needs to be clarified in the definitions.

Tariffs

It was noted that the tariffs, when presented on their own, may be misleading without more context data, and a more comprehensive review of all of the tariffs and the costs for each municipality. In order to understand the appropriateness of the tariff, a detailed understanding of the specific financial and operating conditions of each individual municipality is necessary.

7.3.2 Internal management focus

As with the regulatory focus comments, the delegate comments on the internal management focus were primarily around the necessity to extend definitions and to work towards a more interactive benchmarking process where the municipalities can receive direct feedback on their performance, with interpretation for their context.

There was an overwhelming interest expressed by the delegates in attending both the regulatory and internal management focus indicator sessions since there is a close overlap between the sets of indicators. A suggestion for the next conference was that data should be presented to all delegates together instead of break away sessions dealing with different sets of indicators.

7.3.3 Improving the process

The following suggestions were made to improve the process:

Ensuring success

- Thought should be given to creating a cadre of graduates to assist with the data collection within municipalities, especially for those with low capacity.
- Where practical, there should be help with handover procedures in WSAs to help with continuity (where there is a change of staff).
- Thought should be given to the development of an induction pack for the whole benchmarking process. This will help with new municipalities and also when there is a change of staff.

Amending KPIs

- Suggestions were made to improve the data collected on human resource capacity and to pay more attention to this important area.
- It was noted that the MDB conducts an annual capacity assessment and that this data could be integrated into the benchmarking process. However, this should not replace the direct request for HR information from water services managers in the benchmarking process.
- See also notes made above.

New KPIs

- It was proposed to include an Infrastructure leakage index.
- Where other systems are already reporting extensively, for example, the DWQ, it was suggested that the reporting from the benchmarking should be compared to this reporting. It was decided to keep NBI DWQ indicators.
- People wanted more understanding on the cost and tariffs issues.

Participants were very positive in evaluating the conference and their comments and suggestions are included in Appendix 1 at the end of this report.

8 Conclusions and the way forward

This round (2006/6) of water services benchmarking constituted a significant improvement on the previous year, in terms of participation and coverage. 22 municipalities participated in the previous cycle and 48 participated in this cycle from a list of 70 invitees. In terms of coverage, the 48 participating WSAs account for 86% of the country's population, according to the 2001 census spread.

Given that this is year 2 of a national benchmarking, much of the effort of this process focused on the definitions of indicators, and collation and verification of data. In future years, it can be expected to slowly shift to more effort on refinement, internal review and continuous improvement initiatives.

An evaluation of this process and the associated conference held in February, suggests the following areas to improve and build upon:

8.1 Increasing participation

A lot of effort should be placed on getting all municipalities to participate. This is primarily the responsibility of SALGA.

SALGA will invite all municipalities (invites to go to both the MM and WSA manager) as soon as possible.

Building effective and sustainable peer networks is probably the most important step to building a sustainable benchmarking programme. Meetings with WSAs will take place through existing forums (CWMMF, DWMMF and the newly/ to be established LWMMFs, the WSP network, the Provincial water sector forums and the DWQ forums.

WSAs should be encouraged to participate even if they can provide only a few indicators.

8.2 Ensuring successful participation

Successful participation requires the identification, engagement and support of three key people within the WSA, namely:

- the municipal manager
- The water services manager
- The person within the municipality responsible for the benchmarking data.

This is illustrated below. Continuity between years (and proper handovers when staff change) is also very important.

8.3 Changes to indicators

Amendments to existing indicators

The following will be considered:

- Improve on the partial definition of access used
- Classification of chemical toilets to be clarified.
- A more sophisticated definition for sampling failures needs exploration
- Definitions for Asset management plan can be improved

Possible new indicators

The following new indicators were proposed:

- Response to DWQ failures
- More detail is needed on HR capacity
- Financial impact of non-revenue water losses
- More detail on tariffs
- Water-use efficiency to be explored.

These will be considered by the steering committee. It was noted that we should be cautious about expanding the indicator set and concentrate rather on getting the basic right.

8.4 Improving data confidence

More attention will be paid to the confidence of the data supplied.

9 References

SALGA, DWAF, WRC. 2006. National Water Services Benchmarking Initiative. Promoting best practice. Benchmarking outcomes for 2004/5.

10 Appendix 1 – Conference Evaluation Comments

Below are a set of comments that were made in the evaluation of the conference and are captured verbatim:

Key benefits

- Very interesting to be part of this process. This kind of process is absolutely critical to the success.
- Learnt a lot, from comparisons of various municipalities. Can see short-comings and have a desire to improve.
- Being here has been very useful, in the sense that belonging to a political component, I have not been exposed to the level of detail that is required to get things right.
- Very much pleased of having been here as a councillor for the first time.
- Very interesting to be here. Very useful to see what local government is about
- A big effort is (needed) towards small local authorities, even if only a few indicators are returned.
- very interesting
- excellent
- Bringing all the presentations together to creating awareness was fundamental
- interaction between different types of municipalities is very good.
- very interesting, will work harder
- very important to be able to be here.
- remaining in contact with colleagues in the water sector is great

Suggestions for improvement

- Lets us all have a chance to see all the indicators (not in separate sections), to learn from each other
- Would like to see SAAWU results
- Cannot think of an improvement
- There should be an encouragement to expose all councillors to come here
- How possible is it to involve National Treasury in this process? To make a motivation for operation and maintenance funds.
- We should greet one another – introduce ourselves.
- Benchmarking I find difficult, maybe a venue with windows and ventilation would help
- Think about agenda design – for interest groups. Different for Councillors, supporters, officials ...
- Market more to small WSAs
- More on tariffs – introduce the complexity
- Time-frame was too long for the internal focus, agree to have one session.
- more time needed, more detail
- Provincial offices should be invited.
- Need to encourage all WSAs to be part of this.
- 2 days is very minimal, but 3 days is quite long.
- More time needed for interactions.
- Problem with different sessions held simultaneously.
- Web-based site could have a link with MDB link with assessments.
- Could have blogs or web-based forums

- Quarterly report to SAAWU. Can use this for municipalities.
- make more space for municipalities to talk
- Should regional offices come?
- spend more time on the indicators themselves
- If councillors come, be careful ...
- Bekha – good that councillors come ...
- good quality presentations
- Councillors should come, without hijacking ...
- very good to learn
- Use an evaluation form to save time ...
- adopt a provincial benchmarking process?
- WSAs should contact William to present on best practices

a process suggestion from a delegate ...

"I found your benchmarking conference very interesting, and look forward to seeing the outputs over the next few years, as I am interested in the whole question of delivery of services, and perhaps more so in government accountability. As neither a benchmarking specialist, nor a WSA/WSP rep, I felt I needed to observe rather than participate, but I did feel for you at times when you were battling to get responses from the floor. [It might be an idea to hand out response sheets at key stages and give everybody, say, 20 minutes to fill them in. That way you capture, in writing, comment from all, even the shy ones, and you personally get a break to go outside and get some fresh air. Then you collect all the sheets for capture and analysis, and have a staff member to do that and you give the floor a report back after several hours. Then you can have some discussion about the findings as well. If you rely on only verbal feedback you will tend to get the views of only those who feel most confident ...

These suggestions will be taken to the steering committee for discussion and decisions.