

Towards norms and standards for water services in rural South Africa

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Abstract

In South Africa, the current norms and standards for levels of water services have, over the last few decades, inadvertently focused on addressing water services in urban areas. The Minister responsible for water and sanitation initiated the development of revised norms and standards for equitable water services to all citizens, taking into account availability of water resources, financial challenges, geographical placement issues, servicing vulnerable groups and addressing the backlog, especially in rural areas. The project followed a participatory approach by focussing on workshops with key stakeholders and role players in the water sector, and work sessions with officials and implementers at national and local levels. The process culminated in revised goal and principles for appropriate levels of water services for the development of norms and standards that will be applied in the rural landscape of South Africa.

Keywords: Water service, level of water services, participatory development, water ladder, water quality, sustainability.