

A literature review of the twinning approach in supporting developmental water services by water services institutions (WSIs) and water services authorities (WSAs) in South Africa

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to review international literature and to contextualise it to South Africa's water services institutions. On the basis of the literature evidence, the following questions will be discussed:

- How is "twinning" to be conceptualised and operationalised
- What are the expected outputs and outcomes of implementation of the twinning approach
- How to draw the lessons from international literature for implementing a twinning approach in South Africa's water services institutions and exploit the benefits thereof

While it is often not feasible to measure success of an approach in a scientific fashion, this paper shows that this less-researched approach can improve integrated strategic objectives of developmental water services and co-operative governance in South African spheres of government in general and water services institutions in particular. Inductively, it is recommended that the hands-on support on developmental water services in South Africa provides an opportunity to explore and exploit the twinning approach benefits and outcomes thereof. Such benefits and outcomes include, *inter alia*, addressing WSAs and WSIs capacity constraints for implementation of developmental water services reforms as per national targets described in the Water Services Strategic Framework (2003) and other pieces of legislation pursuant to post-Apartheid local government developmental agenda (LGDA).

Keywords: capacity building, decentralisation, devolution of powers, Local Government, Organisational Development, pairing, support programmes, twinning, water services

Abbreviations

CBOs	community-based organisations
CMAs	catchment management agencies
DPLG	Department of Provincial and Local Government
DORA	Division of Revenue Act
DTI	Department of Trade and Industry
DWAF	Department of Water Affairs and Forestry
IDPs	integrated development plans
MoC	memorandum of co-operation
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGOs	non-governmental organisations
Norad	Norwegian International Development Co-operation Agency
O&M	operation and maintenance
PPPs	private public partnerships
SADC	South African Development Community
SALGA	South African Local Government Association
Sida	Swedish International Development Agency
TA	technical assistance
WSAs	water services authorities
WSDPs	water services development plans
WSIs	water services institutions

Introduction and background of the twinning approach

The twinning approach was employed in the early 1980s by various international co-operation agencies such as Sida and Norad to promote effective institutional capacity building of various countries and their respective institutions. A literature search reveals that if the twinning approach is used in a correct manner, it can be an optimal technique for institutional capacity building and support for general and integrated services. There is general consensus among writers that twinning arrangements should be critically applied to ensure that similar partners are identified in order to focus on the strategic institutional objectives of developmental water services. Van Ryneveld and Sproule (2005) supported by Brikke (2000) and Tsibani (2004) describe developmental water services as an agglomeration of a number of disparate disciplines such as engineering, environment, programme management, health, education, development and policy in order to meet the water supply and sanitation services of the present by 2008 and 2010 respectively without compromising the needs of the future generations. The term "developmental water services" is coined by Van Ryneveld and Sproule (2005). This will ensure that the selection of key officials and the management of the twinning arrangement are taken into consideration. Therefore, the twinning approach should be seen as a new way of dealing with "developmental water services" implementation and operational issues rather than as a prescribed practice. This requires a greater conceptual clarity by stakeholders and institutions involved. It goes without saying that all parties or institutions should give more attention to governance and strategic administrative management issues before any kind of twin-

* Unless advised otherwise, this paper represents the views of the author and does not necessarily reflect the official position of the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry (DWAF). Thus, views and comments can be forwarded to the author at PO Box 4129, The Reeds, 0158, City of Tshwane, RSA

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