



2025/26 Call for Concept Notes (Proposals)

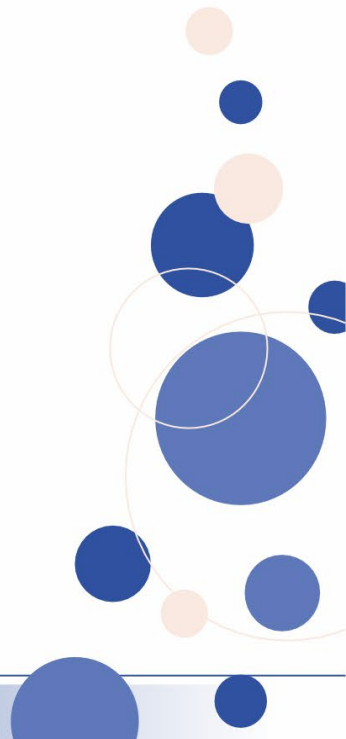
Research, Development, and Innovation



WRC at a glance

VISION

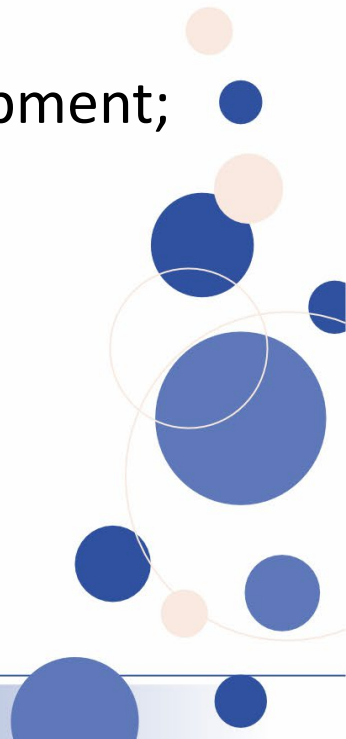
To be the premier water Research Development and Innovation knowledge hub in South Africa and globally.



Mission

Coordinate and promote water research development and innovation to enhance evidence-based decision-making for improved socio-economic conditions and technological developments to:

- Inform policy and decision-making;
- Create new products, innovations and services for socio-economic development;
- Develop human capital in the water and sanitation science sector;
- Empower communities and reduces poverty; and
- Support the national transformation and redress project.



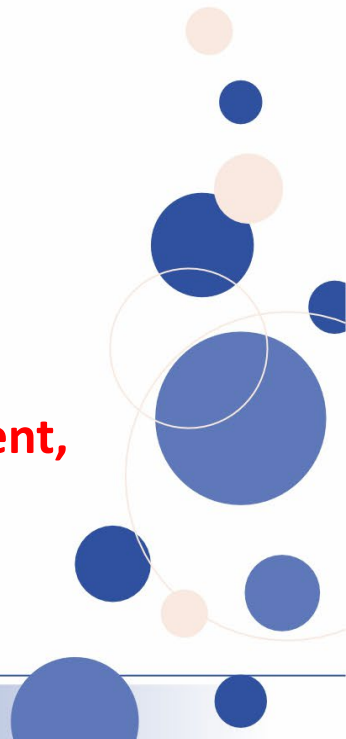
Overview



- The WRC fulfils its mandate by prioritising water research that addresses the needs of the water sector and its stakeholders.
- Supported RDI projects encompass all aspects of the water cycle.
- The RDI agenda tackles water security and socio-economic challenges in South Africa while driving an innovation-led water and sanitation sector.
- Five thematic areas guide the generation of new knowledge, the development of innovations, and capacity building:
 1. Water availability
 2. Water use
 3. Water quality and health
 4. Water advisory support
 5. Knowledge services

Each thematic area has specific focus areas which are provided in the call document to guide you.

This call for research proposals aims to address national challenges through research, development, and innovation, enabling the WRC to enhance water security while promoting adaptation and resilience to climate change.



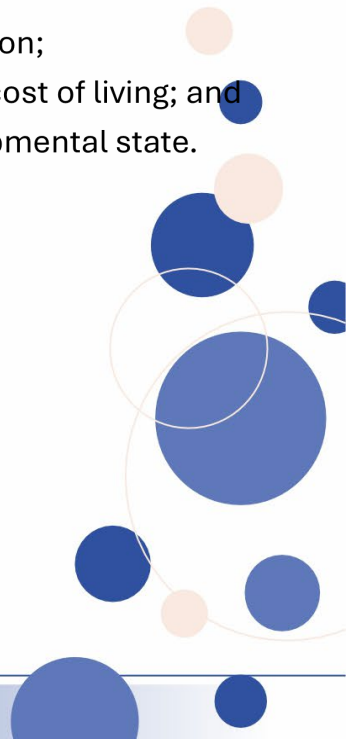
Strategic priorities

- The WRC's strategy is anchored on the following priority outcomes:
 1. **An innovative water sector** that leverages research, technology, and innovation to address challenges.
 2. **An informed water sector** that is empowered with knowledge and actively takes part in water-related decision-making.
 3. **A transformed water sector** that is inclusive, equitable, and reflective of South Africa's developmental goals.
 4. **An agile organisation** that effectively responds to emerging challenges and opportunities in the water sector.
- These outcomes are aligned to DWS and GNU priorities

Medium Term Development Plan 2024 2029

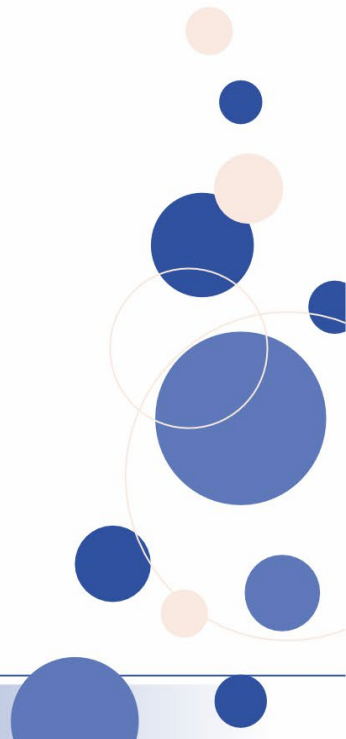
Three priorities of the government of national unity:

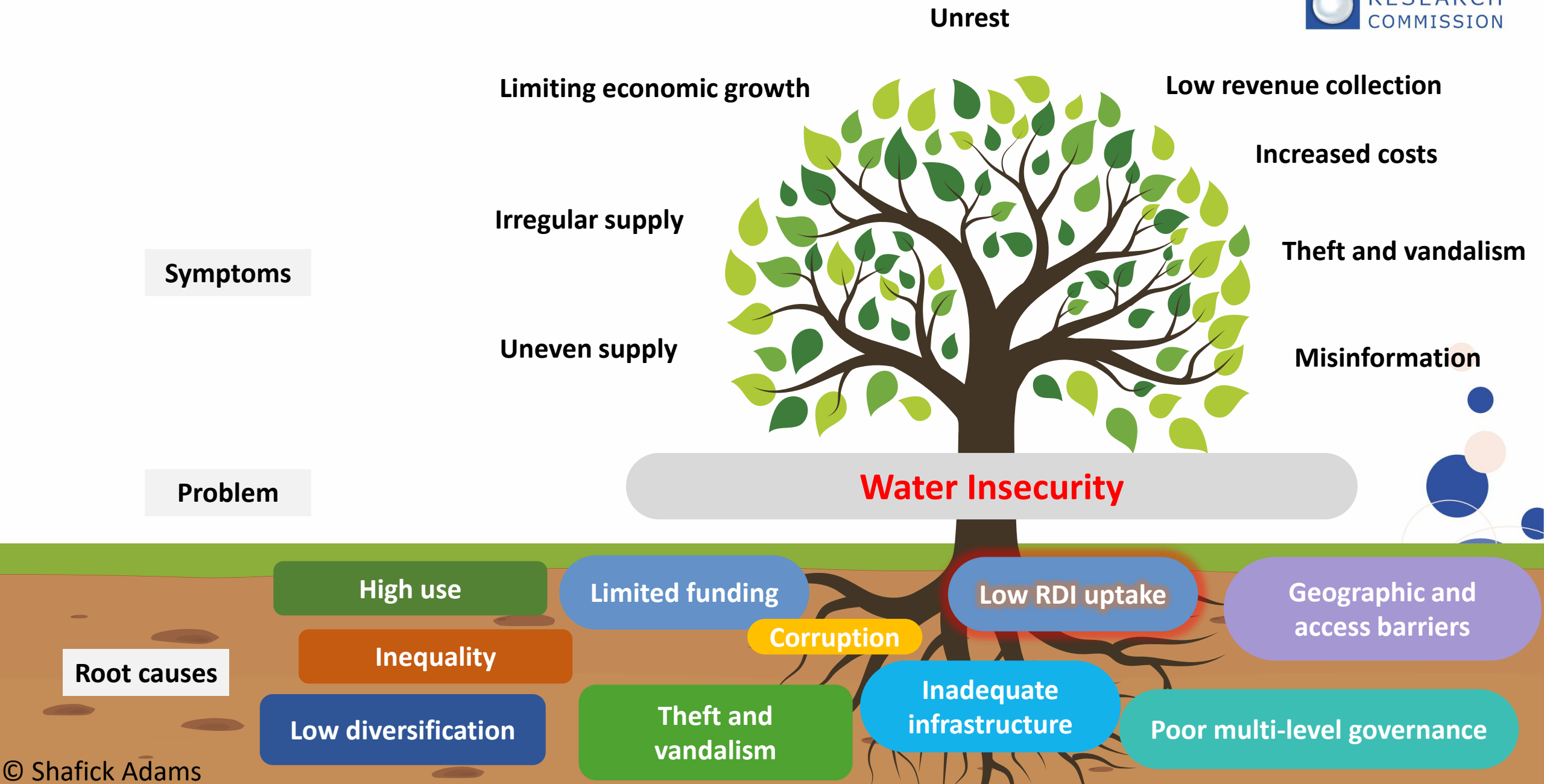
- To drive inclusive growth and job creation;
- To reduce poverty and tackle the high cost of living; and
- To build a capable, ethical and developmental state.



Challenges

1. Failing water service delivery at the local level.
2. Inefficient water use across all users.
3. Poor resilience to global changes
4. Weaknesses in the institutional landscape or governance of water and sanitation
5. Slow digital transition for improved water and sanitation management
6. Deterioration of water resources and increase of associated health risks.
7. Neglecting of new, emerging, and fundamental RDI





Results Chain Analysis

INPUTS

Who and what you need for a successful project (skills, infrastructure, equipment, ...)

ACTIVITIES

How will you be doing it?

OUTPUTS

What are the outputs that will enable the outcomes?

OUTCOMES

What do we want to change or improve?

IMPACTS

Societal benefit
Environmental benefit

Type of calls

1. Open Research Call

- Knowledge Reviews
- Blue Sky RDI
- Impact Studies of WRC RDI
- Innovation Development
- Economics of Water

2. Open Targeted Research Call

- Youth Researcher Development
- Female Researcher Development
- Artificial Intelligence (& Internet of Things)

3. Open Directed Call (Project titles only)

4. Directed Research Call (with Terms Of References)

Study the call document

Important dates

06 June 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launch and advertise the Call on various platforms
18 June 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BMS enabled to receive Concept notes
18 – 19 June 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WRC 101 online workshop
11 July 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submission deadline of Concept Notes
SCREENING AND PRE-SELECTION OF SUBMITTED PROJECT PROPOSALS/CONCEPT NOTES	
12 – 21 July 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial screening and review of concept notes Concept notes for approval. Review Panel members identified per Theme
22 – 25 July 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project leaders / institutions informed of the successful (approved) Concept Notes. Panel/ Review invitation letter set out
28 – July 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BMS enabled to receive full proposal of Approved Concept Notes only.
15 August 2025 (15H00)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submission of the proposal due date
EVALUATION , SELECTION AND MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT	
25 – 29 August 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal review / panel meetings
01 – 05 September 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommendation to EXCO for Approval
16 September 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executive Approval for funding
18 – 25 September 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decision letters to Institutions/Contractors
18 – 26 September 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BMS is enabled to receive proposal amendments
01 October 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project MoAs signing to start

Project start 01 April 2026