

Under the High Patronage of His Majesty King Mohammed VI



XIX WORLD WATER CONGRESS
International Water Resources Association (IWRA)
Marrakech, Morocco | 1-5 December 2025

Kingdom of Morocco



Ministry of
Equipment and Water

The South African Water Justice Tracker: Measuring Progressive Realisation of the Right to Water

Prof Tracy-Lynn Field & Dr Henk Boshoff
University of the Witwatersrand, South African Human Rights
Commission
1 December 2025

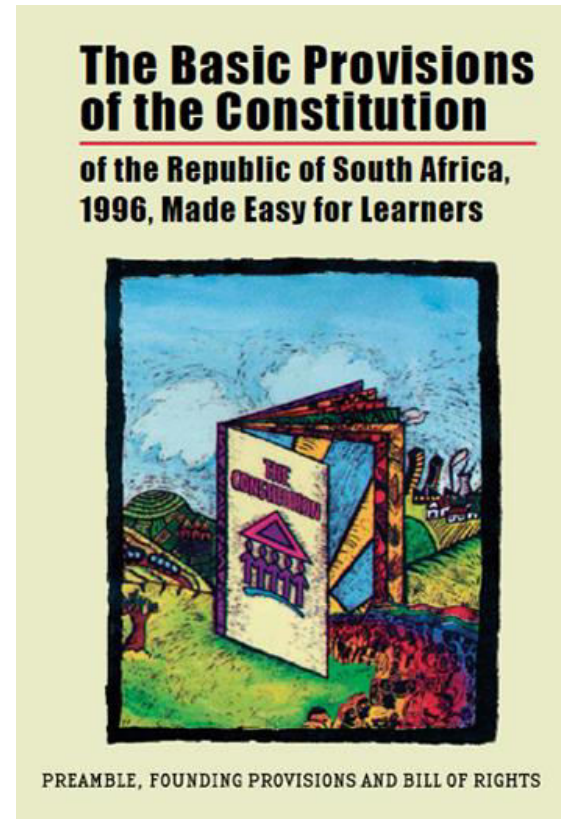
Right to water and sanitation in South Africa: 1994 Grand Challenge



XIX WORLD WATER CONGRESS
International Water Resources Association (IWRA)
Marrakech, Morocco | 1-5 December 2025



- ❑ 63 million people, high inequality
- ❑ Dawn of democracy challenge: Potable water - 14 million lacked access; safe sanitation – 21 million lacked access



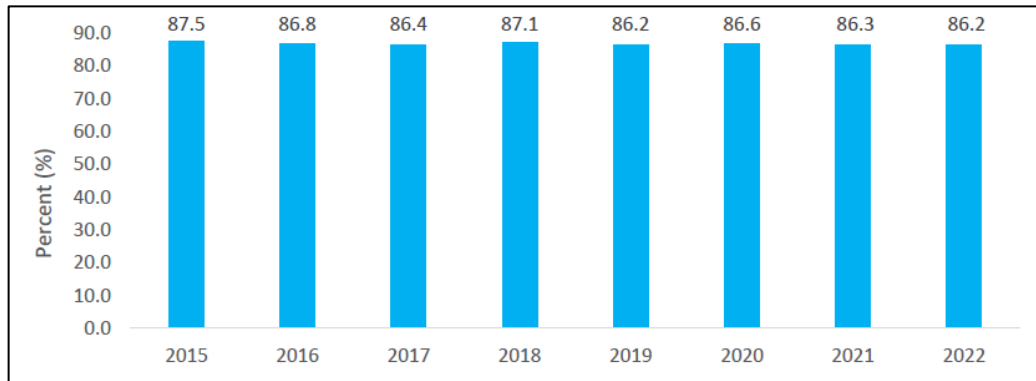
- ❑ Right of access to sufficient water, subject to progressive realisation
- ❑ Water services a “local government matter” - 144 local Water Services Authorities (WSAs)
- ❑ Chapter 9 Institutions – including mandate for the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC)



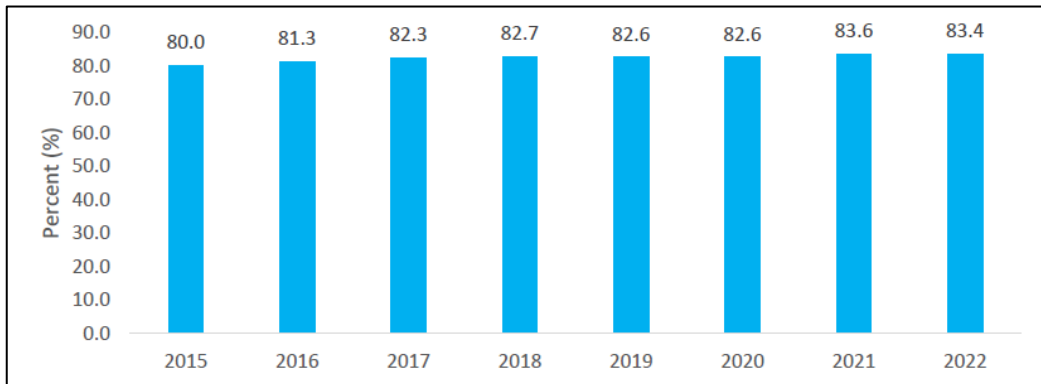
Right to water and sanitation in South Africa: Significant progress – but challenges remain



XIX WORLD WATER CONGRESS
International Water Resources Association (IWRA)
Marrakech, Morocco | 1-5 December 2025



SDG 6 Indicator 6.1.1 – Proportion of population using safely managed drinking water service (South Africa Sustainable Development Goals Country Report, 2023)



SDG 6 Indicator 6.2.1 – Proportion of population using safely managed sanitation services (South Africa Sustainable Development Goals Country Report, 2023)



- Poor microbiological and chemical compliance: 46% – up from 5% in 2013
- More than 50% of WSAs have at least one WWTW in non-compliance
- Non-revenue water average is 47%



Progressive realisation of the right to water: Research gap

- ❑ Numerous reports, articles, audits, complaints on dysfunctional water services from government, civil society, academia, science councils, Water Research Commission
- ❑ Numerous oversight institutions (SAHRC, Public Protector, Auditor-General, courts, national and provincial legislative oversight committees)
- ❑ No systemic synthesis of socio-economic context, physical context, water infrastructure assets, policy measures, human and financial resources, implementation metrics, and oversight recommendations and directives
- ❑ No human rights framing



Lead Institutions



XIX WORLD WATER CONGRESS
International Water Resources Association (IWRA)
Marrakech, Morocco | 1-5 December 2025



- ☐ Claude Leon Chair in Earth Justice and Stewardship



- ☐ Mandated to promote, protect and monitor the realization of human rights in South Africa
Section 181 & 184 of the Constitution read with the South African Human Rights Commission Act 40 of 2013
- ☐ Formal Collaboration and Project Agreements



Research design

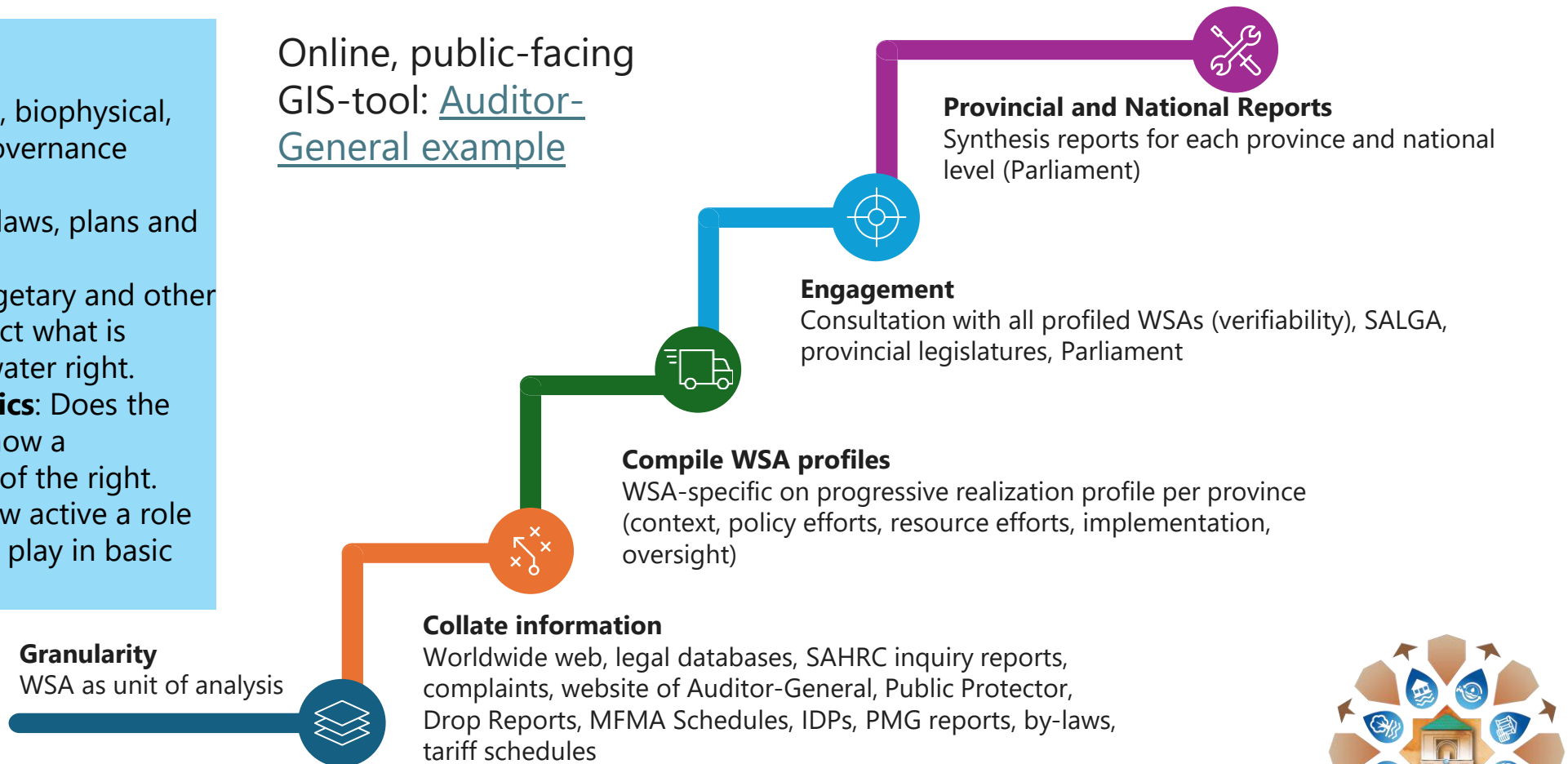


XIX WORLD WATER CONGRESS
International Water Resources Association (IWRA)
Marrakech, Morocco | 1-5 December 2025

Indicators Table:

About **32** Indicators:

- ❑ **Context:** Demographic, biophysical, socio-economic and governance conditions.
- ❑ **Policy Efforts:** Key by-laws, plans and other regulations.
- ❑ **Resource Efforts:** Budgetary and other resource priorities reflect what is needed to realise the water right.
- ❑ **Implementation Metrics:** Does the position of residents show a progressive realisation of the right.
- ❑ **Oversight:** Evaluate how active a role supervisory institutions play in basic water services delivery.





WJT Profiles and Verification

Indicator	Measurement	Sources
Name of the WSA		
Geographical information about the WSA. Positioning in the province etc. About two sentences.	Local municipality in Waterberg District Municipality. Situated in South Limpopo.	
Is the WSA authorized to provide water services?	yes	MDM Capacity Assessment, 21
Is the WSA currently providing water services?	both water treatment and tap water	IDP 2023/24
Does the WSA have the necessary infrastructure?	treatment works, reservoirs and pipes	IDP 2023/24, p 117
Method of service provision	Self	IDP 2023/24, p 117
	The WSA uses water from Magalies Water to supplement its water supply.	IDP 2023/24, p 117





WJT Value: SAHRC Perspective

- ❑ Enhances **monitoring and oversight role** of the SAHRC in tracking and assessing WSAs in the fulfilment of their obligations regarding delivery of water.
 - ❑ Enables SAHRC to **foster accountability and transparency**.
 - ❑ Enables SAHRC to make **pointed policy recommendations and suggestions** on how the right to access sufficient water can be realised in South Africa.
 - ❑ EnsureS that SAHRC contributes to **knowledge development** and enable academic research and the deployment of knowledge tools to tackle the systemic water challenges in South Africa.
-
- ❑ **Several drivers** inhibit the ability of WSAs to effectively deliver on the right to water
 - ❑ SAHRC has released a **policy brief on water infrastructure sabotage** urging several interventions
 - ❑ **Water and energy nexus** and the need for international human rights law to consider access to a healthy and sustainable energy as a human right.
 - ❑ A **whole of society approach** is required in tackling water challenges in South Africa



State of progressive realisation: Summary View

RIGHTS-HOLDERS		
Demographics	Current Population: Ranges from 750,821 (Census 2022) to 922,078 (Blue Drop) Population growth rate: 3.2% Sex Ratio: Moderate female majority Dependency: 32.6% under 15; dependency ratio 61.5	
Unemployment	52.8%	
KEY IMPLEMENTATION INDICATORS		
Availability	Raw water, dam 87% of capacity is used	
Physical Access	No communal source	0%
	Communal source +200m	1.8%
	Communal source -200m	8.7%
	Water source in yard	89%
	Piped water in house	25.9%
	Service delivery point/household coverage ratio	0.88
Economic Access	Tariff variation: Residential, business, NPOs/NGOs Tariff structure: Increasing block tariff (3 blocks, R0-R13.64) FBW: Indigent only Indigency: 2.3% of service delivery points, decreasing trend	
Adequacy	Unplanned interruptions (2023): Average duration:	
Quality	Microbiological compliance	99.8%
	Chemical (acute) compliance	40%
	Chemical (chronic) compliance	99.6%
Efficiency	WUE Score: 143 l/p/d (Extremely poor) Non-revenue water: 28%	
REASONABLE MEASURES		
Policy Efforts	By-law, Indigency Policy and Register, WSDP	
Financial Resources (2024/25)	Budget sufficiency: 102%	



XIX WORLD WATER CONGRESS
International Water Resources Association (IWRA)
Marrakech, Morocco | 1-5 December 2025



XIX World Water Congress

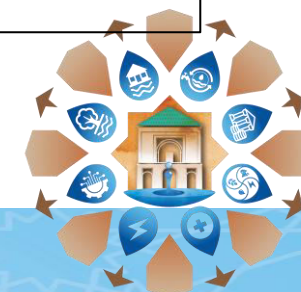
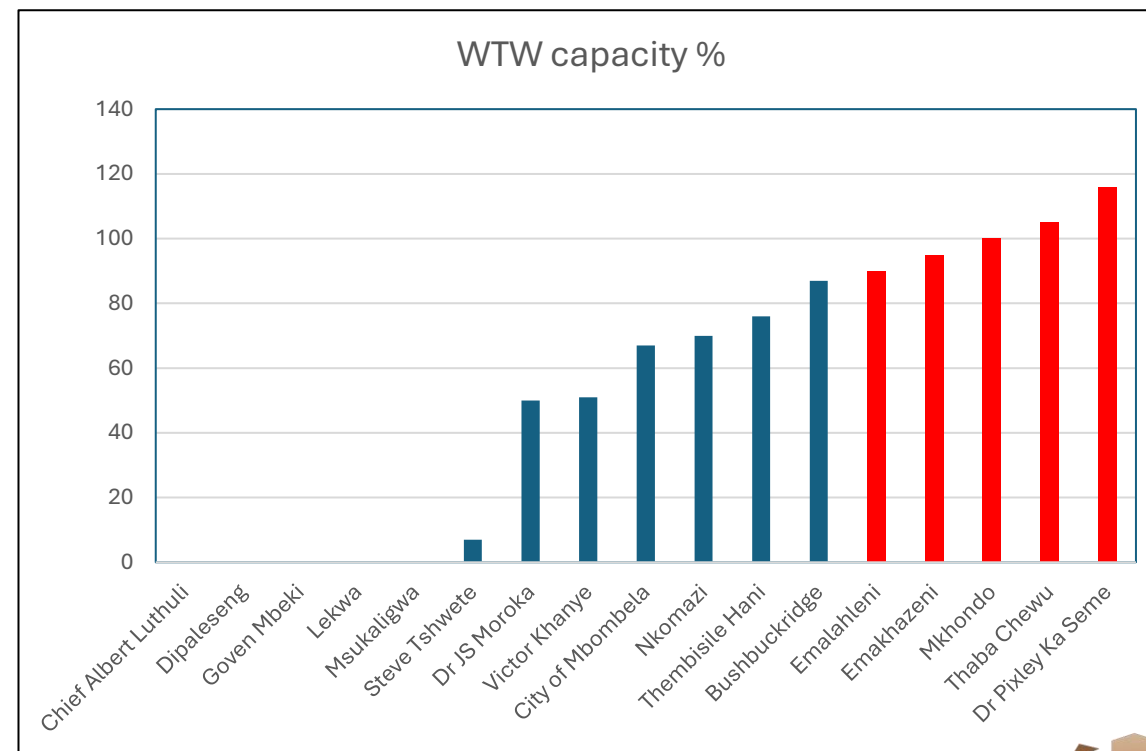
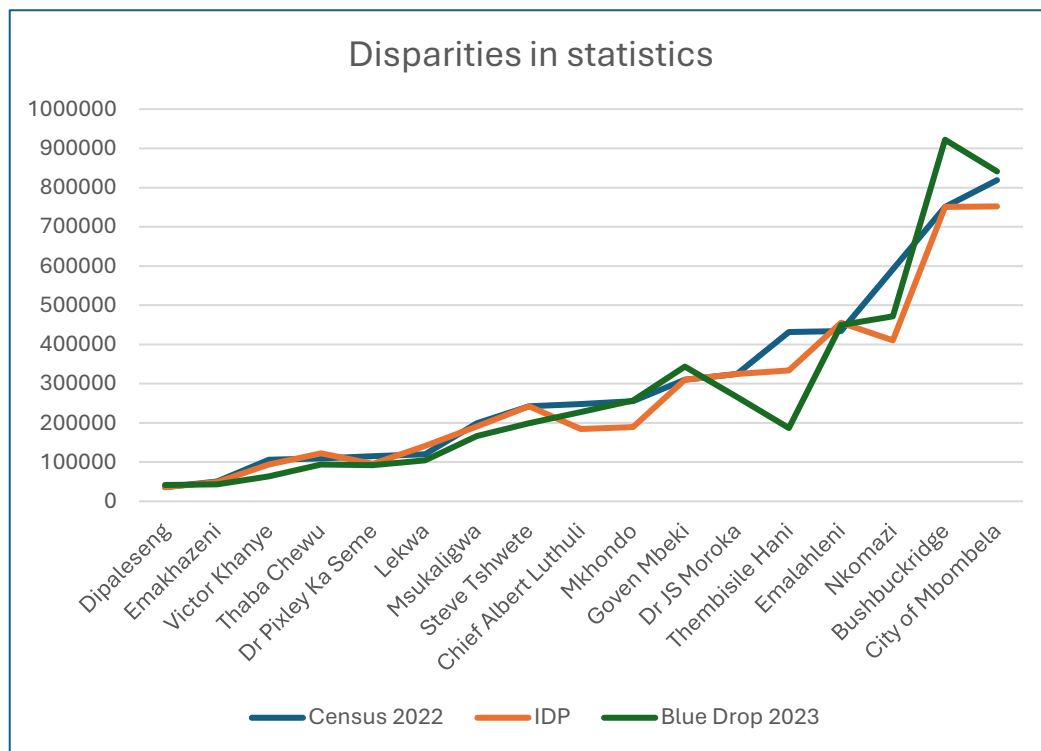
English (United States)

Text Predictions: On

Accessibility: Investigate



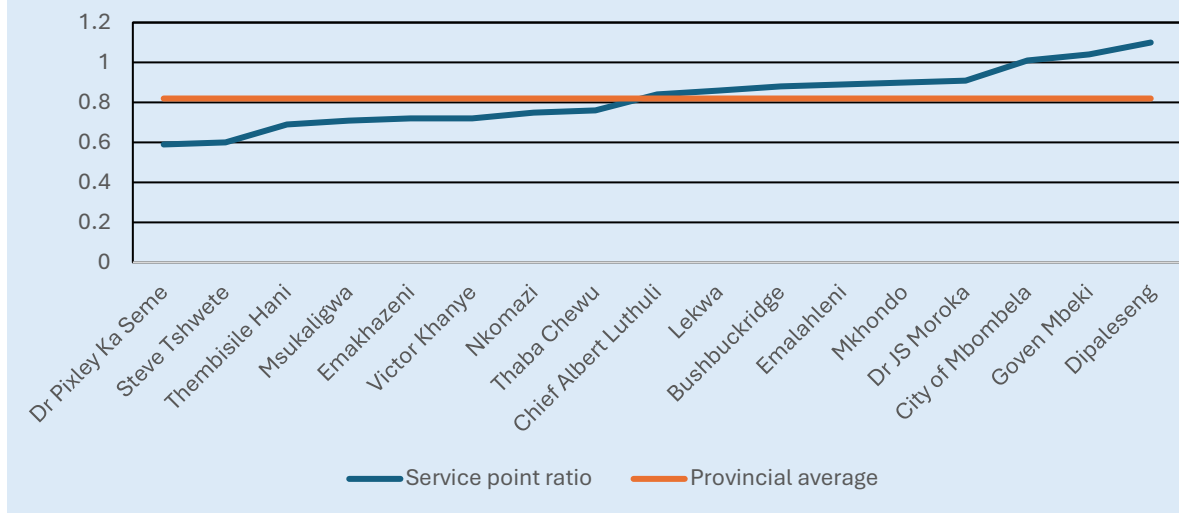
State of progressive realisation: Some preliminary findings – Mpumalanga Province



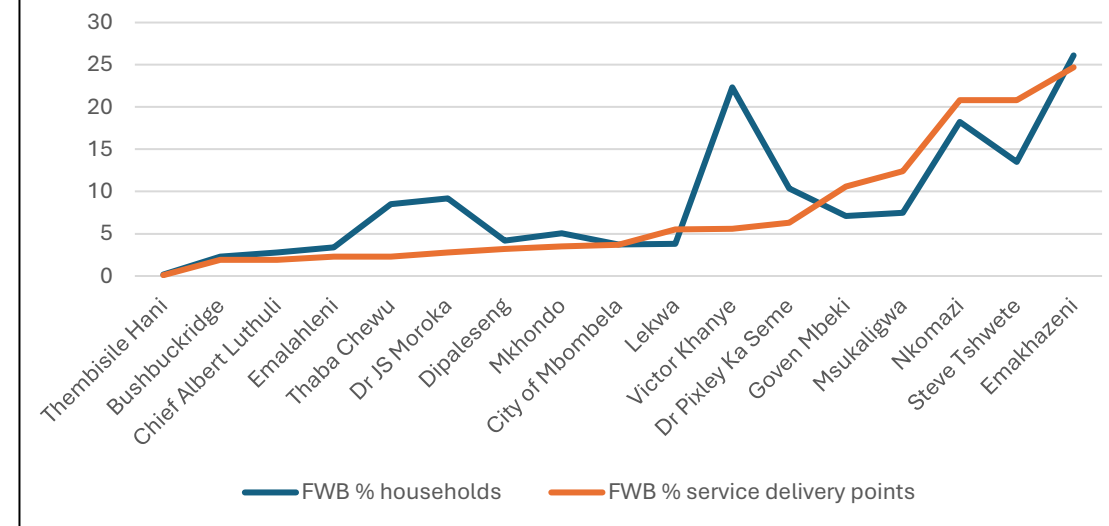


State of progressive realisation: Some preliminary findings – Mpumalanga Province

Service point coverage



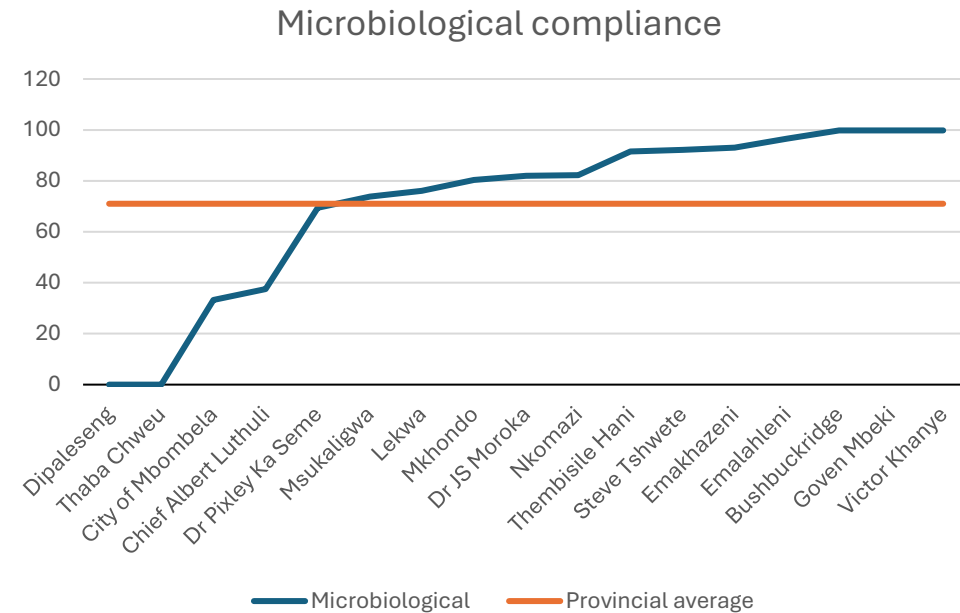
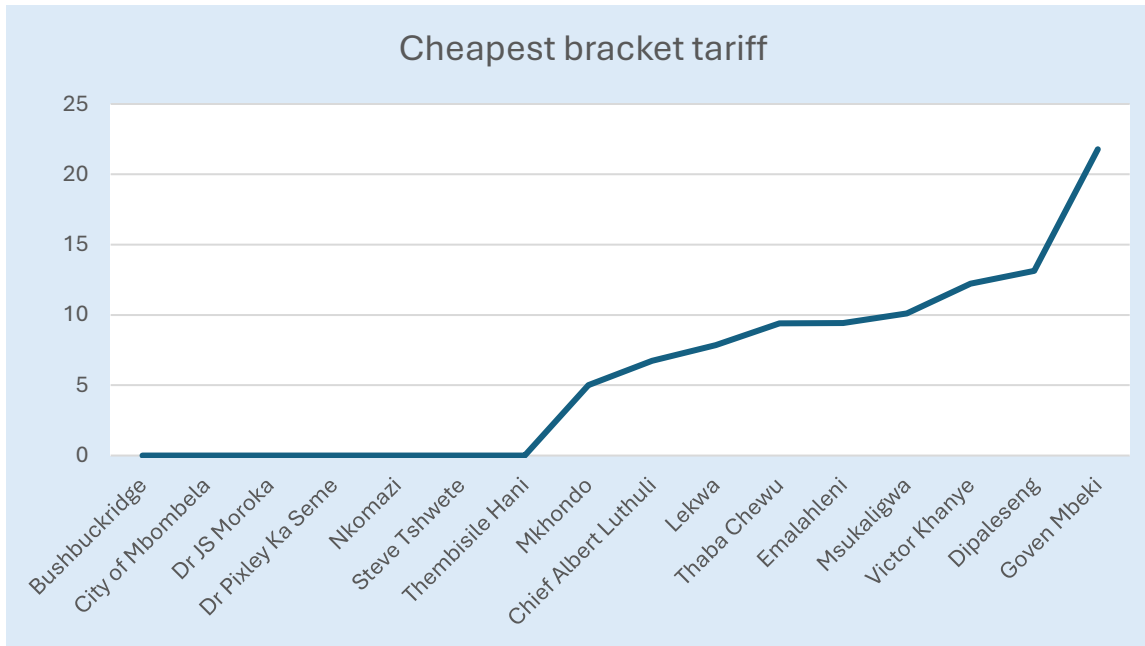
FBW %



State of progressive realisation: Some preliminary findings – Mpumalanga Province



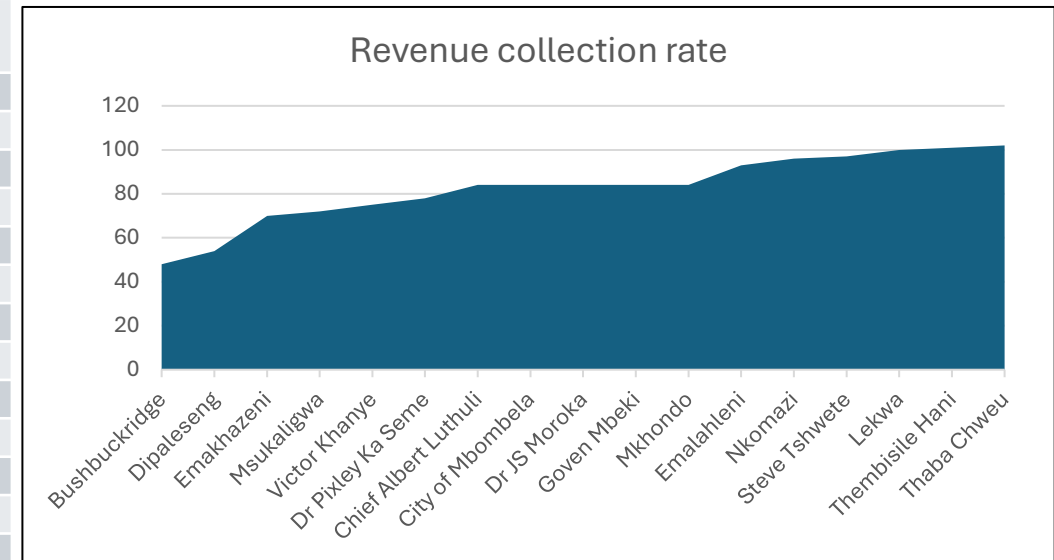
XIX WORLD WATER CONGRESS
International Water Resources Association (IWRA)
Marrakech, Morocco | 1-5 December 2025





State of progressive realisation: Some preliminary findings – Mpumalanga Province

Municipality	By-law	WSDP	Indigent Policy
Bushbuckridge	X	X	X
Chief Albert Luthuli	X	O	X
City of Mbombela	X	O	X
Dipaleseng	!	!	X
Dr JS Moroka	X	X	X
Dr Pixley Ka Seme	X	O	X
Emakhazeni	X	O	X
Emalahleni	X	X	X
Goven Mbeki	X	X	X
Lekwa	!	O	!
Mkhondo	X	O	X
Msukaligwa	X	X	X
Nkomazi	X	O	X
Steve Tshwete	X	O	X
Thaba Chweu	X	X	X
Thembisile Hani	X	O	X
Victor Khanye	X	O	X





State of progressive realisation: Some preliminary findings – Mpumalanga Province

Municipality	Leadership	Planning	Funding	Infrastructure	Electricity	Ecological	Consumer	Intermediaries	Third Party
Bushbuckridge	X	X	X	X		X	X		X
Chief Albert Luthuli	X	X	X	X	X		X		X
City of Mbombela	X	X	X	X		X	X		X
Dipaleseng	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
Dr JS Moroka	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
Dr Pixley Ka Seme	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
Emakhazeni	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X
Emalahleni	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
Goven Mbeki	X	X	X	X	X				X
Lekwa	X	X	X	X	X		X		X
Mkhondo	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
Msukaligwa	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Nkomazi	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
Steve Tshwete	X	X	X	X					X
Thaba Chewu	X	X	X	X	X		X		X
Thembisile Hani	X	X	X	X		X	X		X
Victor Khanye	X	X	X	X		X	X		X



Under the High Patronage of His Majesty King Mohammed VI



XIX WORLD WATER CONGRESS
International Water Resources Association (IWRA)
Marrakech, Morocco | 1-5 December 2025

Thank you!

Email
Website
Social media

www.worldwatercongress.com