



WATERNET-WRC WEBINAR

Workshop: Impacts of COVID-19 on capacity building activities in the water sector in the SADC region and beyond

Date: 26 June 2020

Time: 10:00 – 11:00 (CAT)




Human capacity building programmes in integrated water resources management are key in ensuring and enhancing sustainable water resources management in the Southern African Region Community (SADC) region. The water sector in the SADC region has key players such as represented as WaterNet, the Water Research Commission (WRC), Water Institute of Southern Africa (WISA), Global Water Partnership Southern Africa (GWPSA), International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), SADC Groundwater Management Institute for Southern Africa (SADC GMI), AUDA-NEPAD Southern African Network of Water Centres of Excellence and the World Wide Fund For Nature (WWF) which all have played a critical role in undertaking different capacity building programmes which include education, bursary programmes, short professional development courses, research and outreach. The programmes are targeting students, young and emerging researchers, practitioners and engineers in the water sector. Several achievements have been achieved through the implementation of these programmes. For example, the WaterNet education programme has graduated more than 500 students who are all playing critical roles in the water sector within the region. The short professional courses programme of WaterNet has seen over 80 courses being undertaken benefiting over 2000 participants who have acquired new knowledge and skills necessary to their employment placements. Under the WaterNet research programme, several projects have been undertaken over the last two decades which all have had policy implications, production of MPhil/PhD students and the generation of new knowledge. The outreach programme of WaterNet has seen a total of 20 symposia being undertaken since the year 2000 which have brought together academics, policy makers and development practitioners discussing issues related to IWRM in the SADC region. As part of the South African National Water Research, Development and Innovation Roadmap, the WRC in partnership with the Departments of Science and Innovation, and Water and Sanitation mapped the existing and the required skills for an effective water sector and together with other education partners further established programmes to bridge the gap and building a critical mass of water scientists with an introduction of a few occupational water sector qualifications. All these programmes are currently being affected by the spread of COVID-19.



The COVID-19 pandemic which has spread rapidly across the world has had devastating impacts on different sectors of economies, some which have completely shut down for months now. Capacity building activities for IWRM in the water sector in the SADC region have also been affected as a result of the measures which have been taken by governments with the sole aim of containing the spread of COVID-19. It is thus important to have an analysis of how the COVID-19 pandemic has affected capacity building activities in the water sector within the region. Such an analysis will help in highlighting both the positive and negative impacts of the COVID-19 in the

region. The analysis will further assist in finding mitigation measures on the negative impacts of the pandemic. The three speakers will provide different perspectives on the impacts of COVID-19 on the water sector in the SADC region in this webinar.

The presenters will specifically address the following issues:

- Highlight the extent of the impacts of COVID-19 on the capacity building activities in SADC region
- Identify the impacts of the COVID-19 in Member States in the programmes of the water sector and the provision of services
- How the SADC Secretariat can better mobilise and coordinate its partners' (SADC subsidiary institutions and partners) and ICP support to recovery programmes of the region's Member States
- Propose measures needed for effective response to identified impacts and coordination of COVID-19 at all levels (Member States, River Basins and Regional scales)
- The way forward post-COVID-19 regarding capacity building in the water sector in the SADC region
- Recommendations for capacity building institutions, policy and International Cooperating Partners.

Introductory Remarks	
	<p>Mr Dhesigen Naidoo Chief Executive Officer - Water Research Commission</p>
Presenters	
	<p>Dr Lapologang Magole Senior Lecturer, University of Botswana's Department of Architecture and Planning.</p>
	<p>Dr Julie Reeves Researcher Developer <i>Vitae Researcher Developer Senior Fellow (VRDSF) CIPD Associate</i> Centre for Higher Education Practice - CHEP University of Southampton</p>

	<p>Dr Valerie Naidoo Executive Manager for Business Development and Innovation - Water Research Commission (WRC)</p> <p>And</p> <p>Ms Anita Pillay Training and Accreditation Manager - Water Institute of Southern Africa</p>
<p>Moderator</p> 	<p>Dr Joel Kabika, School of Engineering, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, University of Zambia</p>