

AU-AIP AFRICA WATER INVESTMENT SUMMIT CAPE TOWN REPORT

13 TO 15 AUGUST 2025
CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA



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ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| AFD | AGENCE FRANÇAISE DE DÉVELOPPEMENT |
| AFDB | AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK |
| AI | ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE |
| AIP | CONTINENTAL AFRICA WATER INVESTMENT PROGRAMME |
| AMCOW | AFRICAN MINISTERS COUNCIL ON WATER |
| AU | AFRICAN UNION |
| AUC | AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION |
| AUDA-NEPAD | AFRICAN UNION DEVELOPMENT AGENCY – NEW PARTNERSHIP FOR AFRICA’S DEVELOPMENT |
| DBSA | DEVELOPMENT BANK OF SOUTHERN AFRICA |
| G20 | GROUP OF TWENTY |
| GCF | GREEN CLIMATE FUND |
| GIZ | DEUTSCHE GESELLSCHAFT FÜR INTERNATIONALE ZUSAMMENARBEIT (GERMAN DEVELOPMENT AGENCY) |
| GWP | GLOBAL WATER PARTNERSHIP |
| GWPSA | GLOBAL WATER PARTNERSHIP SOUTHERN AFRICA |
| IDC | INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION |
| MDB | MULTILATERAL DEVELOPMENT BANK |
| PPP | PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP |
| SADC | SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY |
| SDG | SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL |
| UAE | UNITED ARAB EMIRATES |
| UK | UNITED KINGDOM |
| UN | UNITED NATIONS |
| USD | UNITED STATES DOLLAR |
| WASH | WATER, SANITATION, AND HYGIENE |

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The AU-AIP Africa Water Investment Summit 2025, convened in Cape Town under the African Union (AU) and South Africa's Group of Twenty (G20) Presidency, marked a historic turning point for Africa's water and sanitation sector. Bringing together African Heads of State, Ministers, development finance institutions, global investors, the private sector, youth, and civil society, the Summit responded to the urgent need to mobilise investment and address Africa's USD 30 billion annual water investment gap.

Officially opened by H.E. Cyril Ramaphosa, President of the Republic of South Africa and current G20 President, the Summit attracted more than 1,700 delegates, including 38 African Water Ministers and their representatives. International participation included representatives from the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Saudi Arabia, Barbados, the Netherlands, Italy, Germany, and the United Kingdom (UK), alongside financiers, public and private investors, academics, civil society, and development partners.

Summit objectives

At its core, the Summit aimed to accelerate progress towards Sustainable Development Goal 6 (SDG 6) (Clean Water and Sanitation) and the AU's Agenda 2063 by catalysing large-scale, climate-resilient water investments. Delegates engaged in high-level policy discussions, project matchmaking, and partnership building to address barriers to finance and to chart a path for innovative, efficient, and inclusive solutions that can unlock both domestic and external resources for water and sanitation.

Key Outcomes: Over USD 10-12 billion annual water investments pipelines identified.

The Summit was a landmark occasion convened by the African Union and the Republic of South Africa as and Chair of the G20. The Summit resulted in significant outcomes:

First, at least an annual pipeline of USD 10 and 12 billion worth investments were secured at the Summit. These pledges came from multilateral development banks, bilateral partners, governments and private investors. They represent tangible agreements that will flow into water security and sanitation projects across the continent.

Second, beyond the agreements already secured, the Summit presented to investors a pipeline of 80 projects from across Africa, with a total capital value of USD 32 billion and an investment ask of USD 15.9 billion. These projects are now under negotiation, with many pledges conditional upon due diligence, bridging studies and co-financing. An online investment portal, launched during the Summit, will continue to capture these pledges and accelerate negotiations.

Third, accountability and transparency remain at the core

of the Summit and what follows next. Partners committed to work with AU and G20 to track and report annually to the African Union and the G20 Leaders, including on the disbursement and utilisation of pledged investments through four principal mechanisms:

- The African Union AIP Water Investment Scorecard, which will track progress with country and continental benchmarks.
- The newly inaugurated G20 Presidential Legacy Initiative- Global Outlook Council on Water Investments and Global Water Investment Platform (GIP), launched by H.E Cyril Ramaphosa, President of South Africa in his capacity as Chair of the G20.
- A dedicated online water investment portal to ensure transparency and follow up on ongoing commitments by countries and partners including at project level; and
- Integration of the Summit Declaration into the G20 Presidency Leaders Declaration in November 2025 and the African Union Summit in February 2026

The launch of the Global Outlook Council on Water Investments and Global Water Investment Platform (GIP), as a G20 Presidential Legacy Initiative, aims to coordinate advocacy, track progress on finance, foster innovation, and promote accountability at the highest levels of global diplomacy.

More than 80 projects from 38 African countries were showcased to investors during the matchmaking sessions, demonstrating the diversity, depth, and readiness of Africa's pipeline, and emphasising the need for continued mobilisation of resources.

The Summit focused on governance reforms, specifically on the critical need for adequate and affordable tariff reforms as a precondition for unlocking finance. It also highlighted the importance of innovative financing models – including decentralised finance options and climate finance – and the role of both public-private and public-public partnerships as crucial enablers of sustainable investment across diverse contexts.

Youth participation was notably prominent, with the Youth Water Investment Track recognising youth-led innovations and fostering a new generation of water leaders. Visionary leadership was also acknowledged through the Presidential Global Water Changemaker Awards, which celebrates those who are advancing national and regional water and climate agendas.

The adoption of the Cape Town Declaration reaffirmed the essential role of water and sanitation in peace, human dignity, economic growth, public health, climate resilience, and food security.

HIGHLIGHTS OF KEY COMMITMENTS MADE DURING THE SUMMIT.

World Bank: ~\$6 billion current portfolio (30+ projects) plus ~\$2 billion concessional lending for Africa. Large projects upcoming in South Africa, Kenya, DRC, Angola.

African Development Bank: ~\$6 billion ongoing portfolio (46 countries, 110 projects). ~\$5-6 billion pipeline over next 3 years, with a focus on NEXUS projects, utility efficiency, and urban sanitation (\$7 billion over 10 years). At the Summit identified 27 projects worth US\$2.8 billion for potential financing. Reiterated its pledge of US\$12 billion in water investments (2021–2030), including US\$7 billion for sanitation and a new initiative to strengthen utilities.

Standard Bank: Funds available for bankable projects, working on a few viable ones and providing project funding flows where conditions are right. Portfolio of over \$3 billion in infrastructure in Africa.

Development Bank of South Africa: Pipeline of over \$2 billion in SADC (Lesotho-Botswana, Mauritius, Namibia, Tanzania); \$18.2 billion already in South African system, with an infrastructure fund crowding in \$46.2 billion Rand.

Green Climate Fund: Highlighted the Climate Change Resilience Programme in South Africa, involving a \$1.5 billion investment for water reuse infrastructure aimed at enhancing water security and attracting private sector investment through blended finance.

United Arab Emirates: Invests through the Abu Dhabi Fund for Development, which since 1969 has committed US\$4.5 billion specifically to water projects worldwide, with a strong footprint in Africa.

Tanzania: Pledged \$ 6 billion domestic resources by 2030 through Tanzania Water Investment Programme

Tunisia: Outlined a 2050 water strategy requiring US\$24 billion, of which US\$3.7 billion has already been invested. Tunisia will cover 15% of costs domestically while seeking international investors.

Malawi: Moved from ~0.5% of GDP invested in water to 1.1% and is targeting 1.5% of GDP for the water

Namibia: Earmarked 5% of its national budget for water and sanitation, equivalent to N\$6 billion

South Africa: Over ZAR 100 billion in projects under preparation, including Lesotho Highlands Phase II and major pipelines in Limpopo and the Northern Cape.

Accountability and transparency

The Summit emphasised that sustainable progress depends on collective, cross-sectoral action. This includes strong political leadership, efficient institutions, enabling regulatory frameworks, and constructive engagement from investors and civil society. Tools such as the AIP-PIDA Water Investment Scorecard and a dedicated investment portal were introduced to ensure continued accountability, transparency, and momentum.

Commitments and the road ahead

Looking ahead, the Summit resolved to host the Africa Water Investment Summit every four years in order to ensure ongoing monitoring and accountability. Institutional mechanisms, such as the ongoing use of the AIP Scorecard and partnership with the United Nations (UN) and multilateral

development systems, will be leveraged to keep water and sanitation investments at the forefront of Africa's transformation agenda. The Summit Declaration's inclusion in the outcomes of South Africa's G20 Presidency and at future AU Assemblies underscores the political momentum generated.

Conclusion

The 2025 Summit's achievements – billions in potential investments, new partnership platforms, strong political and technical commitments, and global recognition – will serve as a foundation for increased water investment and resilience across Africa. By anchoring water as a priority for growth and adaptation, the continent is poised to ensure lasting benefits for its people and for global sustainability, climate security, and prosperity.

INTRODUCTION

The AU-AIP Africa Water Investment Summit 2025 was convened from 13 to 15 August 2025 in Cape Town, South Africa, under the banner of South Africa's Group of Twenty (G20) Presidency. The Summit brought together African Heads of State, Ministers, development finance institutions, global investors, private sector leaders, civil society, youth, and academia in a unified effort to close Africa's USD 30 billion annual water investment gap.

The event was jointly organised by the Republic of South Africa and the African Union Commission (AUC), in collaboration with the African Union Development Agency – AUDA-NEPAD, AU-AIP International High-Level Panel on Water Investments for Africa and the Global Water Partnership (GWP).

The Summit was anchored in the G20 theme of “Solidarity, Equality and Sustainability” and served as a premier platform to translate political will into investment commitments, showcasing Africa's leadership in climate and water resilience while attracting capital flows from global markets.

Delegates participated in high-level dialogues, project matchmaking sessions, and negotiations that culminated in a Summit Declaration on Water Investments, intended to influence both continental and global development agendas, including preparations for the 2026 UN Water Conference.

1.1 CONTEXT

The Summit was built on strong foundations. In 2021, African Heads of State endorsed the Continental Africa

Water Investment Programme (AIP) under the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa to transform the investment landscape for water and sanitation. The AIP is also a flagship programme of the AU Climate Change and Resilient Development Strategy and Action Plan (2022–2032).

The AU-AIP International High-Level Panel on Water Investments for Africa has since produced key strategic documents, including Africa's Rising Investment Tide and the Africa Water Investment Action Plan (2023), which outline pathways to mobilise an additional USD 30 billion annually by 2030 for climate-resilient water and sanitation.

At the UN General Assembly in 2023, African leaders, the AU Commission, and the High-Level Panel launched the “Mind the Gap – Invest in Water” campaign, further raising awareness and driving momentum towards bridging Africa's water investment deficit.

The Cape Town Summit was therefore conceived as a moment for catalytic action, to align political priorities with bold investments, forge enduring partnerships, and chart a prosperous, climate-secure water future for Africa.

1.2 SUMMARY OUTCOMES

The AU-AIP Africa Water Investment Summit 2025 delivered historic outcomes, combining financial pledges; political commitments to increase water budgets and drive the reforms needed for finance to flow; institutional innovations; and youth-driven solutions.

1.2.1 Pipeline investments and commitments



- The Summit highlighted an annual pipeline of investments worth at least USD 10–12 billion from development banks, governments, bilateral partners, and private investors.
- More than 80 projects from 38 African countries, including 16 regional projects, were showcased, representing investments (mostly capital investments) of USD 32 billion with an investment ask of USD 15.9 billion.
- The projects spanned multiple subsectors: water supply and sanitation, multipurpose infrastructure, flood management, early warning

systems, aquaculture, integrated water resources management, energy efficiency, water transport, and nature-based solutions. A few projects focused on efficiency gains (i.e. energy efficiency and reducing non-revenue water) and data generation/knowledge management (i.e. early warning systems and data on groundwater).

- Investors in the matchmaking sessions committed to submitting their initial pledges to the online portal, which will increase the total committed investments secured by this Summit.

1.2.2 Attendance and representation



H.E. Cyril Ramaphosa, President of the Republic of South Africa and current G20 President (2nd from right), President Duma Boko of Botswana (far right), King Mswati III of Eswatini (3rd from right), H.E. Jibril Abdirashid Haji Abdi, Deputy Prime Minister of Somalia (far left), H.E. Jakaya Kikwete, Alternate Co-Chair of the International High-level Panel on Water Investments for Africa & Former President of the United Republic of Tanzania (3rd from left), and Nardos Bekele-Thomas, CEO: African Union Development Agency – NEPAD (2nd from left).

Officially opened by H.E. Cyril Ramaphosa, President of the Republic of South Africa and current G20 President, the Summit attracted more than 1,700 delegates, including 38 African Water Ministers and their representatives. International participation included representatives from the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Barbados, the Netherlands, Italy, Germany, and the United Kingdom (UK), alongside financiers, public and private investors, academics, civil society, and development partners.



Some of the Ministers (front row) who attended the Summit.

The Summit carried weight at the highest political levels. In attendance or represented were leaders such as King Mswati III of Eswatini, President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud of Somalia, and President Duma Boko of Botswana. They were joined by global partners: President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan of the UAE (represented by H.E. Sheikh Shakhboot Bin Nahyan

Al Nahyan), Prime Minister Mia Mottley of Barbados (represented by Senior Minister William Duguid), President Paul Kagame of Rwanda (represented by Dr Jimmy Gasore), and President Brahim Ghali of the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (represented by H.E. Mohamed Yeslem Beisat). **See Annex 1 for attendance.**



A cross-section of attendees at the AU-AIP Africa Water Investment Summit 2025.

1.2.3 The Cape Town Declaration on Africa Water Investments

Adopted at the Summit, the Cape Town Declaration on Africa Water Investments (See Annex 2) reaffirmed that water and sanitation are essential to peace, human dignity, climate resilience, public health, food security, and economic transformation. It called for:

- the newly inaugurated Global Outlook Council on Water Investments and Global Water Investment Platform (GIP), a G20 Presidential Legacy Initiative, to advocate for water investments at the highest levels of global diplomacy
- inclusion of the Declaration as part of the outcomes of South Africa's G20 Presidency, to track and report

progress regularly in the implementation of the Legacy Initiative

- the G20 leaders to support the endorsement of water as a core investment priority in the reimagining of multilateral finance
- presentation of the Declaration at the 39th AU Assembly in February 2026 for endorsement
- convening of the AU-AIP Africa Water Investment Summit every four years on a regional rotational basis, under the coordination role of the AUC.

1.2.4 Launch of the Global Outlook Council on Water Investments and Global Investment Platform (GIP)



H.E Cyril Ramaphosa, President of South Africa and current G20 President, launched the Global Outlook Council on Water Investments and Global Water Investment Platform (GIP)

A major outcome was the establishment of the Global Outlook Council on Water Investments and Global Water Investment Platform, launched as a G20 Presidential Legacy Initiative of South Africa. The Council will:

- track progress, unlock finance, report annually, and align efforts across the G20, UN, multilateral development banks, and the private sector; and

- mobilise the leadership, capital, and innovation required to transform water from a crisis sector into an opportunity sector.

Refer to President's Ramaphosa's speech for the invited Co-Chairs and Members.

1.2.5 Recognition of leadership: Presidential Global Water Changemaker Awards



The Summit recognised transformative leadership through the Presidential Global Water Changemaker Awards, jointly presented by President Duma Gideon Boko of Botswana, Chair of the Awards, and H.M. King Mswati III of Eswatini, Patron of the Awards.

The recipients were:

- **H.E. President Cyril Ramaphosa of South Africa** – for hosting the AU-AIP Africa Water Investment Summit under South Africa’s G20 Presidency and launching the G20 Presidential Legacy Initiative: Global Outlook Council on Water Investments and Global Investment Platform (GIP).
- **H.R.H. Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman of Saudi Arabia** – for launching the Global Water Organization and initiating the G20 Water Dialogue during Saudi Arabia’s G20 Presidency in 2020.
- **H.M. King Letsie III of Lesotho** – for advancing water security and regional cooperation in southern Africa through the Lesotho Highlands Water Project.
- **H.H. Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the UAE** – for global leadership in water and climate, including hosting COP28 and co-hosting the 2026 UN Water Conference.

- **H.E. President Bassirou Diomaye Faye of Senegal** – for co-hosting the upcoming 2026 UN Water Conference with the UAE and championing Africa’s voice in global water diplomacy.
- **H.E. President Samia Suluhu Hassan of Tanzania** – for pledging USD 6 billion in domestic resources for the Tanzania Water Investment Programme by 2030.



H.E. Cyril Ramaphosa



H.R.H. Prince Mohammed bin Salman Al Saud



H.M. King Letsie III



H.H. Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan



H.E. Bassirou Diomaye Faye



H.E. Samia Suluhu Hassan

1.2.6 Youth Water Investment Track



Youths receive certificates for their participation in the Youth Water Investment Track at the Summit

The Youth Water Investment Track showcased Africa's next generation of innovators, culminating in the recognition of two youth-led solutions addressing water and sanitation challenges. Through a three-day hackathon, young entrepreneurs cocreated practical solutions to accelerate progress in respect of SDG 6. The top two solutions were from Team BukaAmanzi from the University of Cape Town,

whose solution, BukaAmanzi, is a digital transparency tool designed to bridge the gap between government water infrastructure data and community awareness; and Stellenbosch University, whose AquaLink innovation is a real-time water quality data platform using biosensors and Internet of Things technology.



OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE SUMMIT

2.1 SETTING THE SCENE

Day 1 began with a session to set the scene and provide background on the genesis of the AU-AIP Africa Water Investment Summit and its objectives.

2.1.1 Remarks by the host minister, Hon. Pemmy Majodina, Minister of Water and Sanitation, South Africa



In her opening remarks before the arrival of the Heads of State and government for the official opening session, Hon. Pemmy Majodina underscored the urgent global and regional challenges facing the water sector. She highlighted that many countries are not on track to meet their climate change commitments or the SDGs, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa. With less than five years remaining to 2030, progress has been slow: more than 2.2 billion people worldwide still lack access to safe drinking water, and billions live in water-stressed countries.

The Minister emphasised that to achieve universal access, investments must be dramatically scaled up – at least five times more for water and six times more for sanitation. She reminded delegates that “water is life,

and sanitation is dignity”, and stressed that both are fundamental human rights.

Despite the efforts of multilateral institutions, many commitments remain unfulfilled, compounded by geopolitical tensions, trade wars, and the lingering socioeconomic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Hon. Majodina noted that Africa faces an annual financing gap of about USD 30 billion, which must be mobilised to close access gaps and accelerate progress.

Reflecting on the historical journey since the launch of global water initiatives under the leadership of former UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, she called on participants to recognise the responsibility of this generation: to secure shared prosperity, peace, and sustainable development for all.

2.1.2 Presentation by Mr Alex Simalabwi, CEO of Global Water Partnership Organisation, Head AIP Secretariat

Mr Alex Simalabwi, serving as CEO of the Global Water Partnership Organisation and Head of the Summit Secretariat, welcomed delegates to the inaugural AU-AIP Africa Water Investment Summit. He expressed gratitude to the AU, the South African Government, and the many dignitaries, Ministers, and international partners who had gathered in support of Africa's water investment agenda.

He outlined five expected outcomes of the Summit:

1. **Mobilisation of investment pledges** – securing commitments, statements of intent, and financing to narrow Africa's water investment gap.
2. **Adoption of a high-level declaration** – to be presented at the G20 Summit in Johannesburg (2025), the AU Heads of State Summit in Addis Ababa (2026), and the 2026 UN Water Conference.
3. **Launch of the Global Outlook Council on Water Investments and Global Investment Platform (GIP)** – to ensure political momentum and accountability across global platforms, including the UN, G20, and climate negotiations.
4. **Partnership and financing matchmaking** – connecting national project pipelines directly with financiers and investors.
5. **Recognition of global champions** – honouring leaders for their political leadership in advancing water investments.

Mr Simalabwi provided the context of the **AIP**, which originated from the 2016 UN High-Level Panel on Water, co-chaired by world leaders, including three African Heads of State. Although Africa has made significant policy and governance progress, he stressed that implementation has been held back by a financing shortfall of **USD 30 billion annually**.

He explained the findings of the **High-Level Panel on Water Investments for Africa**, which identified that the bulk of potential funding lies within the continent – especially in domestic public budgets, pension funds, sovereign wealth funds, and institutional investors. However, inefficiencies, poor governance, and weak utility performance have discouraged private and institutional investment.

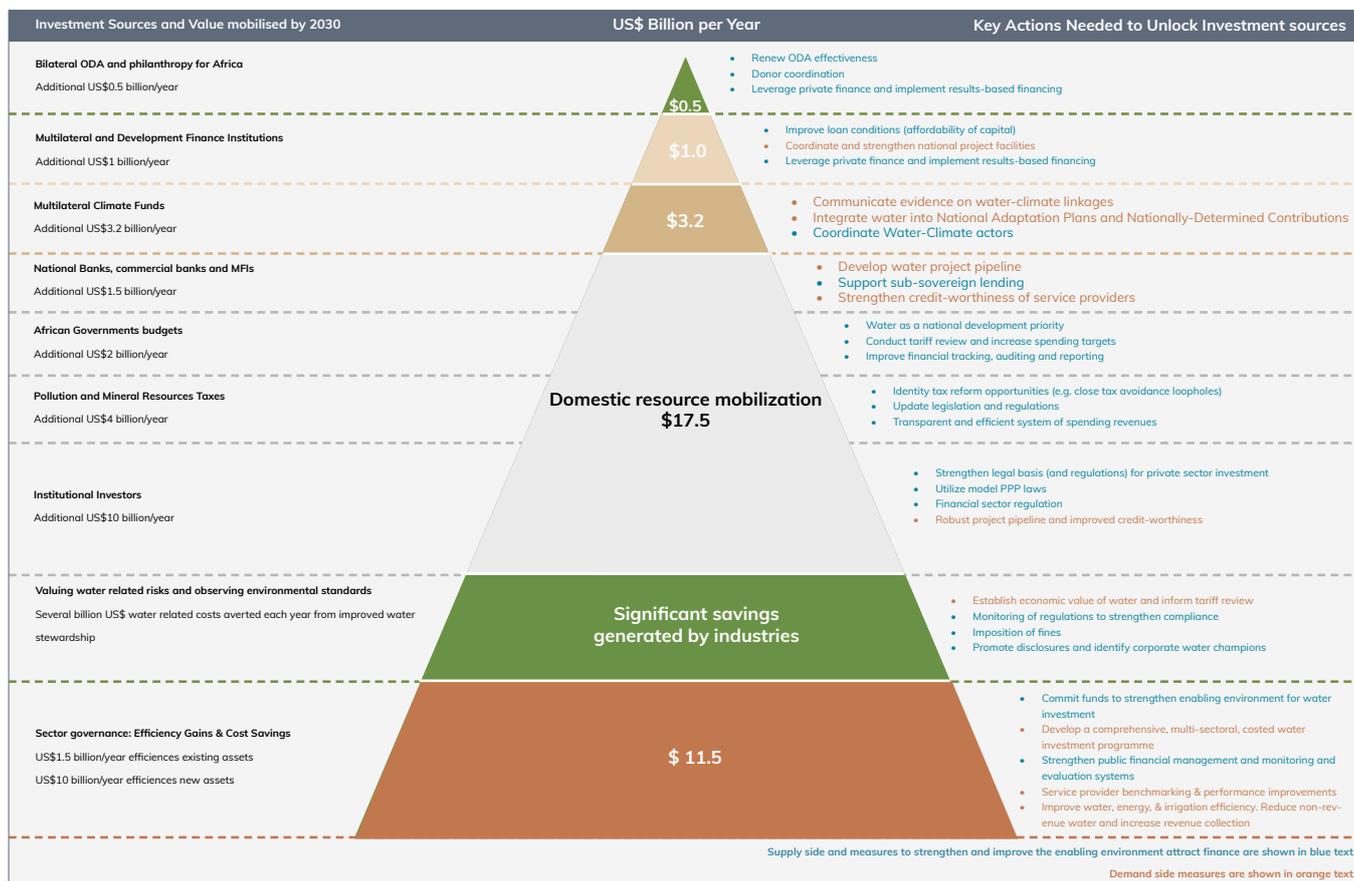
The Panel's five-point action plan emphasised:

- cross-sectoral leadership at the highest political levels;
- strengthened governance, regulation, and efficiency;

- improving the financial viability and creditworthiness of utilities;
- leveraging scarce development assistance strategically to unlock larger flows; and
- creating enabling environments for both public and private sector participation.

Central to the approach is the **Pyramid of Water Investment Transformation**, which illustrates that sustainable financing must rest on a foundation of improved governance and efficiency. Without addressing these fundamentals, additional financing streams – whether from domestic budgets, multilateral development banks (MDBs), or climate funds – cannot be effectively mobilised.





Pyramid of water investment transformation

Mr Simalabwi concluded by presenting the Summit programme, which included high-level round tables with Heads of State, investor dialogues, multiple matchmaking sessions showcasing priority projects, and consultations on the new **Africa Water Vision 2063**. He stressed that this Summit is not a one-off event, but the start of a sustained process backed by the **AIP-PIDA Water Investment Scorecard** to track accountability and implementation.

He closed by reiterating that the responsibility lies with African leaders and partners to mobilise the resources, address inefficiencies, and deliver the transformation needed to achieve universal water security.

2.2 PLENARY 1: HEADS OF STATE ROUND TABLE – ROUND 1

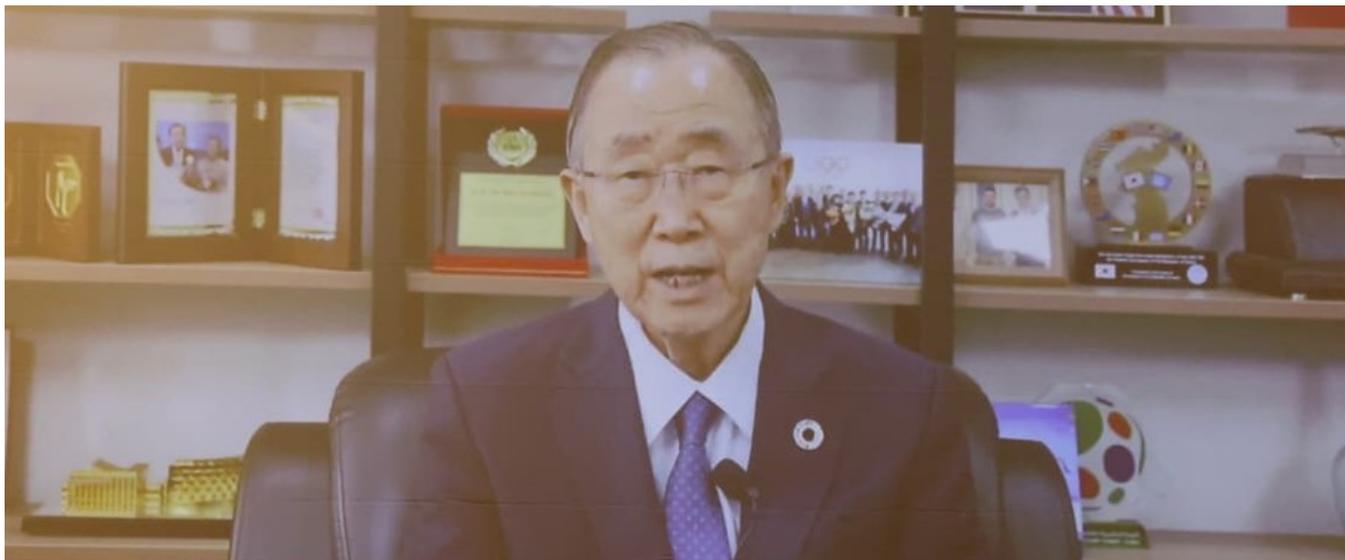
H.E. Cyril Ramaphosa, President of South Africa and current G20 President, officially opened the Summit. He was joined by other Heads of State, including King Mswati III of Eswatini; President Duma Boko of Botswana; H.E. Jibril Abdirashid Haji Abdi, Deputy Prime Minister of Somalia, who represented H.E. Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, President of Somalia; H.E. Moses Vilakati, African Union (AU) Commissioner for Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy and Sustainable Environment; and H.E. Nardos Bekele-Thomas, CEO of AUDA-NEPAD. Ban Ki-moon, former Secretary-General of the United Nations (UN), delivered a video message on the genesis of the

High-Level Panel on Water.

The session included official speeches and a response to the call from leaders by MDBs, recognition of leaders in the Presidential Changemaker Awards, and a reading of the draft Summit Declaration.



2.2.1 Video message from Ban Ki-moon, former Secretary-General of the United Nations, on the genesis of the High-Level Panel on Water Investments for Africa



Ban Ki-moon, former Secretary-General of the UN, congratulated South Africa and the AU on convening the Africa Water Investment Summit, noting its alignment with South Africa's 2025 G20 Presidency under the theme of Solidarity, Equality, and Sustainability. He emphasised that over the next five years, investment, partnerships, and innovation will be critical to achieving all 17 SDGs.

He highlighted the urgent need for integrated and

sustainable water resource management, stressing that targeted water-related investments are essential not only for achieving water and sanitation goals but also for climate change adaptation and mitigation.

Finally, he called for the scaling up of initiatives such as the AU-AIP beyond Africa to other vulnerable regions such as Asia and Latin America to reduce water-related climate disasters.

2.2.2 Official opening statement by H.E. Cyril Ramaphosa, President of South Africa and G20 President



President Cyril Ramaphosa officially opened the AU-AIP Africa Water Investment Summit by welcoming leaders, Ministers, investors, development partners, and stakeholders to Cape Town for what he described as a landmark moment for Africa and the global water agenda.

He emphasised that the Summit takes place at a time of deepening water crisis and also of immense opportunity,

where water can serve not only as a means of survival but also as a driver of economic transformation, innovation, peace, and sustainable development.

Reflecting on the journey that began with the 2016 High-Level Panel on Water, the President reaffirmed Africa's target of mobilising USD 30 billion annually by 2030 to close the continent's water investment gap.

He outlined four clear goals of the Summit:

1. Endorse a Summit Declaration to scale up investments, improve governance, and strengthen accountability in the water sector.
2. Showcase a pipeline of 80 priority investment projects from 38 African countries.
3. Facilitate matchmaking between governments, financiers, and partners.
4. Position water at the highest levels of the global agenda, from the G20 to COP30 and the 2026 UN Water Conference.

President Ramaphosa also launched the Global Outlook Council on Water Investments and Global Water Investment Platform (GIP), a Legacy Initiative of South Africa's G20 Presidency. This Council will serve as the world's premier platform to track progress, unlock

finance, and coordinate global efforts on water, scaling up the Africa Water Investment Programme into a global platform.

He underscored the importance of water as a human right, highlighting the disproportionate burden borne by women and children because of lack of access. He called on investors to seize the opportunity, declaring: "Water must no longer be an afterthought at climate and finance discussions – it must be central, financed, tracked, and championed."

Concluding, President Ramaphosa invoked Nelson Mandela's words – "it is now in your hands" – urging delegates to leave the Summit with concrete deals, partnerships, and a permanent global mechanism to sustain momentum on water investments. **(Read President Cyril Ramaphosa's full speech in Annex 3.)**

2.2.3 Statement by His Majesty King Mswati III of Eswatini



His Majesty King Mswati III commended the convening of the Africa Water Investment Summit, emphasising the critical role of water as the foundation of Africa's sustainable development, economic growth, and climate resilience. He described water as the lifeblood of the continent, essential for agriculture, health, industry, and peace. The King highlighted Eswatini's ongoing national efforts, including large-scale investments in dams, irrigation systems, and safe water supply infrastructure. He noted that the country is finalising the Eswatini Water Investment Programme which will provide a structured framework for resource mobilisation. Eswatini has already identified bankable initiatives requiring USD 115 million, in addition to a water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) master plan estimated at USD 2 billion, and is seeking partnerships with development institutions, private

investors, and climate finance mechanisms such as the Green Climate Fund (GCF), Global Environment Facility, and Adaptation Fund.

His Majesty reaffirmed Eswatini's commitment to transparency and accountability through the AIP-PIDA Water Investment Scorecard, underscoring that tracking progress is key to unlocking sustainable finance and achieving results.

Looking beyond national priorities, he stressed that Africa's water security is inseparable from its future, urging collective continental action to close the USD 30 billion annual water investment gap. He called for strengthened regional cooperation in managing shared river basins and innovative financing approaches to deliver on the AU's vision of "The Africa We Want."

2.2.4 H.E. Jibril Abdirashid Haji Abdi, Deputy Prime Minister of Somalia



Representing H.E. Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, President of Somalia, H.E. Jibril Abdirashid Haji Abdi underlined the urgency of addressing Africa's USD 30 billion annual water investment gap. He stressed that for Somalia, water is not only a development issue but also a matter of survival, stability, and peace, given the country's exposure to droughts, floods, and chronic shortages.

Somalia has prepared a pipeline of transformative, investment-ready water projects valued at more than USD 50 million, with cofinancing commitments from partners including the African Development Bank (AfDB), the Food and Agriculture Organization, the United

Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, and Switzerland. The government is also developing a comprehensive Water Investment Programme, aligned with national strategies and supported by GWP, to mobilise and coordinate long-term financing and governance reforms.

H.E. Jibril Abdirashid Haji Abdi invited governments, development partners, and the private sector to support Somalia's efforts, calling for the Summit to be remembered not only for commitments but also for concrete actions and investments that deliver water security and resilience across Africa.

2.2.5 H.E. Duma Boko, President of the Republic of Botswana



President Duma Boko underscored Botswana's acute water scarcity as a semi-arid country, where climate change, droughts, and erratic rainfall have intensified water shortages and placed pressure on food security and livelihoods. He emphasised that water is a basic right,

yet many settlements in Botswana lack reliable access, creating both urgent challenges and opportunities for investment.

The President outlined Botswana's priorities, including major water transfer schemes, storage facilities, treatment

plants, wastewater reclamation, and expanded reticulation and sanitation networks. He highlighted the need for innovative financing and private sector engagement to complement government efforts, noting that Botswana is advancing the Botswana Economic Transformation Programme to drive sustainable growth, attract investors, and unlock new engines of prosperity.

Recognising Botswana's shared river systems with neighbouring states, he reaffirmed commitment to

transboundary cooperation through the Okavango, Orange, and Zambezi River Basin Commissions, stressing the importance of regional collaboration for water security.

Calling the Summit "timely", President Boko invited African and global partners to invest in Botswana's water and sanitation sector, framing water security as both a national necessity and a continental imperative for sustainable development.

2.2.6 H.E. Jakaya Kikwete, former president of Tanzania and Alternate Co-Chair of the AU-AIP International High-Level Panel on Water Investments for Africa



H.E. Jakaya Kikwete expressed gratitude for being appointed Alternate Co-Chair of the Global Outlook Council on Water Investments and Global Water Investment Platform (GIP), reaffirming his commitment to advancing Africa's water agenda. He highlighted the urgent challenges facing the continent, with more than 400 million people lacking clean drinking water and 700 million without adequate sanitation.

He traced the evolution of the Continental Africa Water Investment Programme (AIP), noting its adoption by the AU in 2021 as a flagship continental initiative, supported by the AIP-PIDA Water Investment Scorecard to track progress.

He emphasised the continent's USD 30 billion annual water investment gap, stressing the need for collective mobilisation to achieve SDG 6 by 2030.

Kikwete also outlined the work of the AU-AIP International High-Level Panel on Water Investments for Africa, including the 2023 Africa's Rising Investment Tide report, the "Mind the Gap – Invest in Water" campaign, and the Africa Water Investment Action Plan, all aimed at scaling resources and awareness. He concluded by commending President Ramaphosa's leadership and expressing confidence that South Africa's G20 Presidency will help elevate Africa's water investment priorities globally.

2.3 ENDORSEMENT OF THE DRAFT SUMMIT DECLARATION AS A LIVING DOCUMENT

2.3.1 H.E. Moses Vilakati, African Union Commissioner for Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy and Sustainable Environment



The draft Summit Declaration was read by H.E. Moses Vilakati, African Union Commissioner for Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy and Sustainable

Environment at the close of Plenary 1 on 13 August 2025 in Cape Town, South Africa. (See the final Declaration in Annex 2.)

RESPONSE TO THE CALL FROM LEADERS

2.3.2 Remarks by H.E. Nardos Bekele-Thomas, CEO of the African Union Development Agency – AUDA NEPAD



H.E. Nardos Bekele-Thomas emphasised that water must be recognised not only as a basic human need but also as a driver of Africa's economic transformation. She stressed the urgent need to close the continent's water financing gap by moving beyond commitments to actual delivery, underscoring AUDA-NEPAD's work in preparing a pipeline of 80 water and sanitation projects across 38 countries.

She highlighted the importance of enabling policies, public-private partnership (PPP) frameworks, and utility

reforms to unlock investment and ensure efficiency. She also pointed to tools such as the AIP-PIDA Water Investment Scorecard to strengthen accountability and track progress towards universal access.

Looking ahead to the AU's designation of 2026 as the Year of Water and Sanitation, she called on governments, development finance institutions, and private sector partners to accelerate action, reminding leaders that Africa's people are impatient for results.

2.3.3 Mr Mtchera Johannes Chirwa, Director of Water and Sanitation, African Development Bank



Speaking on behalf of then AfDB President Dr Akinwumi Adesina, Mr Mtchera Chirwa reaffirmed the Bank's commitment to advancing water security as a cornerstone of Africa's sustainable development. He emphasised that water underpins economic growth, social progress, and job creation, particularly in the face of climate change.

Mr Chirwa noted that MDBs collectively commit USD 10–12 billion annually to Africa's water sector and are working to scale this up to address the continent's USD 30 billion water investment gap. He highlighted AfDB's support for resilient water infrastructure, nature-based solutions, integrated water resources management, and transboundary cooperation, while stressing the importance of innovation and technologies that reduce costs, improve efficiency, and expand access.

The AfDB will support member countries in developing ambitious, sustainable, long-term strategies and compacts to enhance project preparedness, broaden financing opportunities, and foster better-informed investments. It also pledged to collaborate with climate facilities to significantly increase climate finance mobilisation, improve delivery, and strengthen effectiveness.

Mr Chirwa also mentioned that technical assistance will be expanded to promote technology and innovation, particularly solutions that can deliver SDG 6 at a lower cost, improve access, reduce the burden of water collection on women, advance irrigation, and enhance water reuse. He also emphasised better control of water processes and consumption – residential and industrial – through circular economy principles to create cross-industry value.

The AfDB pledged to prioritise sustainability and impact at scale, noting that operational efficiency and service delivery are as important as capital investment. Sustaining existing infrastructure for long-term use will receive greater focus.

Mr Chirwa welcomed South Africa's G20 Presidential Legacy Initiative on water and reiterated AfDB's pledge to align financing with the SDGs, Agenda 2063, and Africa's post-2025 Water Vision. He concluded by reaffirming that MDBs are committed to active coordination among themselves to accelerate investments and delivery and ensure sustainability.

2.4 RECOGNISING COMMITMENT AND POTENTIAL: PRESIDENTIAL WATER CHANGEMAKER AWARDS

The Summit also recognised outstanding leadership through the Presidential Global Water Changemaker Awards, which celebrate governments and leaders driving transformative action in water investments.

Water Changemaker Awards is a global initiative that aims to recognise high-level commitment and leadership for climate-resilient water investments and showcase the most promising climate-resilient innovations with

the greatest potential for scale, replication, and further investment to support a water-secure world.

The Awards include the Presidential Changemaker Award for demonstrated leadership and commitment, and the Innovation Changemaker Award for the most promising climate innovations.

The Presidential Global Water Changemaker Awards 2025 were presented jointly by H.E. President Duma Gideon Boko of Botswana, invited Chair of the Changemaker Awards, together with H.M. King Mswati III of Eswatini, invited Patron of the Changemakers.

THE 2025 RECIPIENTS WERE AS FOLLOWS:

1. His Excellency Cyril Ramaphosa, President of the Republic of South Africa and G20 Chair, was recognised for launching the G20 Presidential Legacy Initiative – Global Outlook Council on Water Investments and Global Water Investment Platform (GIP) and hosting the AU-AIP Africa Water Investment Summit.



H.E Cyril Ramaphosa, President of the Republic of South Africa and G20 Chair (centre), President Duma Gideon Boko of Botswana, Chair of the Awards (right), and H.M. King Mswati III of Eswatini, Patron of the Awards (left).

II. **Saudi Arabia** was recognised for initiating the first-ever G20 Water Dialogues in 2020. Saudi Arabia also launched the Global Water Organization as a transformative initiative to drive global cooperation on water security, sustainable development, peace, and innovation.



H.E. Dr. Abdulaziz Alshaibani, Deputy Minister for Water (centre) receiving the award on behalf of H.R.H. Prince Mohammed bin Salman Al Saud, Crown Prince, Prime Minister of Saudi Arabia.

III. **Senegal** was acknowledged for its leadership in launching the AU-AIP International High-Level Panel on Water Investments for Africa in 2022, co-hosting the upcoming UN 2026 Water Conference with the UAE, and sustaining high-level global water diplomacy that prioritises investment and solidarity.



H.E. Dr. Cheikh Tidiane Dièye, Minister of Water and Sanitation (centre), receiving the award on behalf of H.E. Bassirou Diomaye Faye, President of the Republic of Senegal

IV. **The UAE** was recognised for co-hosting the 2026 UN Water Conference with the Republic of Senegal, sustaining high-level global water diplomacy that prioritises investment and solidarity, elevating water in the global climate agenda through COP28, and promoting inclusive, blended finance models.



H.E. Sheikh Shakhboot bin Nahyan Al Nahyan Minister of State (centre), receiving the award on behalf of H.H. Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the United Arab Emirates.

V. **Lesotho** was acknowledged for its advocacy in regional cooperation, championing the Lesotho Highlands Water Project as a model of transboundary cooperation for peace, resilience, and sustainable development.



Hon. Mhloni Moleko, Minister of Natural Resources and Energy (centre), receiving the award on behalf of H.M. King Letsie III, King of the Kingdom of Lesotho.

VI. **Tanzania** was recognised for pledging USD 6 billion in domestic water investments by 2030 through the Tanzania Water Investment Programme, advancing national and continental leadership in the water and climate space through strategic reforms, financing partnerships, and inclusive governance.



H.E. James G. Bwana, High Commissioner of the United Republic of Tanzania (centre), receiving the award on behalf of H.E. Samia Suluhu Hassan, President of the United Republic of Tanzania.

SUMMIT PLENARY SESSIONS

3.1 WEDNESDAY, 13 AUGUST 2025

3.1.1 Investors speak: What will it take to finance African water projects?

Topic: Investor dialogue on enablers of finance for different types of projects: infrastructure, data, efficiency gains, and institutional capacity. What are they looking for? What has been successful?



Moderator: Hon. David Mahlobo, Deputy Minister of Water and Sanitation, South Africa

Speakers:

- **Hon. Ronald Lamola**, Minister of International Relations and Cooperation and Chair of the G20 Foreign Ministers (online)
- **Joseph Intsiful**, GCF (online)
- **Dr Diego Rodriguez**, Lead Water Economist for eastern and southern Africa, World Bank
- **Mr Mtchera Johannes Chirwa**, Director of Water and Sanitation, AfDB
- **Mr Chuene Ramphela**, Group Executive: Infrastructure, Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA)
- **Ms Agnes Nkosi**, Executive Vice President of Infrastructure, Standard Bank
- **Dr Hubert Danso**, Chairperson and CEO of Africa Investor Group

“Don’t make a promise, just commit and do it.” – David Mahlobo, Deputy Minister of Water and Sanitation, South Africa, opened the plenary with a clear challenge to

investors. The central question: What will it take to finance water and sanitation projects in Africa?

Despite progress since the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Mahlobo reminded delegates of the stark reality: 2.2 billion people lack clean water and 3.6 billion lack sanitation. Governments have stretched their budgets, but “serious challenges remain” in efficiency, institutional capacity, and deteriorating infrastructure.

Speakers emphasised that financing isn’t just about new infrastructure but is also about “improving operational efficiency of existing assets”. Financing must consider governance, institutional reform, and resilience to climate change, with water tied to food and energy security.

Key enablers for finance identified by Minister Lamola and echoed by other speakers include:

- **Infrastructure and bankable projects:** A need for meticulously prepared, investment-ready projects, robust feasibility studies, and PPPs;
- **Data:** Reliable, transparent monitoring, measurement, and reporting systems are crucial to reduce perceived investment risk;

- Efficiency gains: Improving operational efficiency, reducing non-revenue water, minimising costs, and consistent tariff collection are key for project sustainability and attracting low-cost finance; and
- Institutional capacity: Strong, capable institutions with technical expertise for development, operation, financial navigation (e.g. blended finance), and stable regulatory environments.

Joseph Intsiful from the GCF focused on the importance of addressing the specific needs and vulnerabilities of recipient countries or regions, and projects must align with national priorities and involve local stakeholders in planning and implementation. Projects should also meet environmental and social safeguards to minimise negative impacts, with a focus on gender sensitivity in project design.

Mr Intsiful highlighted the Climate Change Resilience Programme in South Africa, involving a USD 1.5 billion investment for water reuse infrastructure aimed at enhancing water security and attracting private sector investment through blended finance. He also gave the example of the Integrated Development Adaptation Programme in the Niger Basin, which focuses on achieving climate-resilient growth across nine countries, with total financing of USD 209 million.

Dr Diego Rodriguez from the World Bank stressed that water faces a “governance crisis, not just a financing gap”. Rodriguez recommended re-evaluating credit risk perceptions associated with African investments, asserting that many such risks are overstated. Strong institutions, independent regulators, and long-term commitments (15–20 years) are essential to attract private capital. He cited Tanzania’s rural water programme using “Performance for Results” for outcomes. Rodriguez advocated for creating partnerships that leverage long-term capital alongside long-term assets, rather than traditional PPPs, which can be complex. He highlighted the underutilisation of Africa’s USD 6 trillion in natural capital, recommending that this be integrated into financial models to unlock significant investments, estimated at USD 18 billion annually by 2050.

The AfDB (Mtchera Chirwa) underlined the need for projects with high social impact, financial viability, and strong institutional frameworks. Credit ratings and risk perceptions must be challenged to unlock domestic financing. He mentioned the use of guarantees and local currency financing (e.g. City of Johannesburg) to mitigate risk and lower borrowing costs.

The DBSA (Chuene Ramphela) mentioned the bank’s strategic focus on water for 43 years and emphasised

bankability, innovative financing (blended finance, PPPs), climate-aware design, good governance, sustainability, and regional integration. He advocated for increasing the water infrastructure budget to 5% of GDP.

Standard Bank (Agnes Nkosi) stressed a commercial bank perspective focusing on “bankable projects”. Key barriers include understanding cash flows (“who’s going to take you out?”), off-taker strength, government support for the vulnerable, capacity for asset management/maintenance, and appropriate tariffs. Ms Nkosi also mentioned the potential in leveraging lessons from the energy sector.

Hubert Danso, representing private investors, advocated for “making development investable” for institutional capital (USD 300 trillion pool). Critiques blended finance as insufficient for the scale of the problem. He proposed legally classifying water ecosystems as national infrastructure, institutional investor public partnerships, leveraging natural capital, and encouraging scalable financial products (water exchange traded funds, nature-linked bonds) linked to environmental, social, and governance capital. Panellists presented current and future pipelines:

World Bank: Approximately 6 billion current portfolio (30+ projects) plus ~USD 2 billion concessional lending for Africa. Large projects upcoming in South Africa, Kenya, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Angola.

AfDB: Approximately USD 6 billion ongoing portfolio (46 countries, 110 projects). ~USD 5–6 billion pipeline over the next three years, with a focus on NEXUS projects, utility efficiency, and urban sanitation (USD 7 billion over 10 years).

Standard Bank: Funds available for bankable projects, working on a few viable ones and providing project funding flows where conditions are right. Portfolio of more than USD 3 billion in infrastructure in Africa.

DBSA: Pipeline of more than USD 2 billion in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) (Lesotho, Botswana, Mauritius, Namibia, Tanzania); USD 18.2 billion already in the South African system, with an infrastructure fund crowding in USD 46.2 billion.

Hon. Mahlobo closed with a powerful reminder: “Water remains an instrument for peace, justice, and sustainability.” The message to governments and financiers alike was: “Move from slogans to

3.1.2 Heads of State round table – Round 2

Topic: Heads of State statements by their representatives

Moderator: Hon. Dr Cheikh Tidiane Dièye, Senegal Minister of Water and Sanitation, President of the African Ministers Council on Water (AMCOW)

Speakers:

- **H.E. Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan**, President of the UAE (represented by H.E. Sheikh Shakhboot Bin Nahyan Al Nahyan, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs)
- **H.E. Mia Mottley**, Prime Minister of Barbados (represented by Hon. William F. Duguid, Minister of Planning and Development, Prime Minister's Office – Senior Minister of Infrastructural Projects and Planning)
- **H.E. Paul Kagame**, President of Rwanda (represented by Dr Jimmy Gasore, Minister of Infrastructure)
- **H.E. Hassan Sheikh Mohamud**, President of the Federal Republic of Somalia (represented by H.E. Abdullahi Bidhaan, Minister of Energy and Water Resources)
- **H.E. Brahim Ghali**, President of the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (Western Sahara) (represented by H.E. Mohamed Yeslem Beisat, Minister of Foreign Affairs and African Issues)
- **H.E. Dr Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah**, President of Namibia (represented by Hon. Inge Zaamwani, Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Land Reform)

In addition, H.E. Dr Abdulaziz Alshaibani, Deputy Minister for Water, Ministry of Environment, Water and Agriculture, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia also participated during the Panel Round Table.

Moderated by Dr Dièye, Minister of Water and Sanitation of Senegal and President of AMCOW, the second Heads of State round table brought Africa's leaders and global partners together under the banner of South Africa's G20 Presidency. Dr Dièye opened with a call to elevate water to "the top of political priorities in Africa and across the world", framing it as not just a resource but "the very source of life, the engine of our economies, and a driver of peace and stability".

Deputy Minister Abdulaziz Alshaibani highlighted Saudi Arabia's reforms: a USD 47 billion private investment portfolio in desalination, wastewater, and water storage. He reminded the Summit that "the gap in achieving SDG 6 has widened" and urged Africa to leverage governance

reforms and partnerships, recalling the G20's 2020 launch of a global water dialogue.

Sheikh Shakhboot Bin Nahyan Al Nahyan, representing the UAE President, stressed that "investment is more than finance alone" – it must include innovation, capacity building, and data. With Africa facing a USD 30 billion annual financing gap, he warned that "we will not close this with business as usual" and called for PPPs and project pipelines ready for capital.

Representing the Prime Minister of Barbados, Mia Mottley, Minister William Duguid called the water crisis "a moral and ethical crisis", insisting that "water is not just a commodity or a resource, it is a human right". He linked water and climate justice, urging systemic reform of the global financial architecture and emphasizing that Small Island States Developing States (SIDS) face unique vulnerabilities.

Minister Jimmy Gasore, for President Kagame of Rwanda, declared that closing Africa's USD 30 billion annual investment gap is "a moral imperative ... about restoring dignity to our people". Rwanda presented three bankable projects and reaffirmed the need for governance and regulatory reforms to de-risk investments and empower communities, especially women and youth.

Minister Mohamed Beisat, representing the President of the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (Western Sahara) underscored that water has become "a matter of national security", warning that desertification and scarcity fuel migration and conflict in Africa's Sahel.

On behalf of the President of Namibia, Dr Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah, Minister Inge Zaamwani stressed: "Commitments must be measured not in documents, but in the number of people gaining access to safe drinking water." Namibia showcased domestic investments and partnerships in desalination and PPPs as examples.

The session concluded with recognition that Africa faces a historic crossroads. Meeting SDG 6 will require predictable financing, innovation, capacity, and inclusive governance. As the moderator summarised: "Africa can accelerate development, resilience, and prosperity by placing water at the heart of investment strategies."

3.1.3 Title: Scaling what works – finance models that are bankable, equitable, and sustainable

Topic: Showcasing Africa's innovative finance in the sector, finance structuring and scaling up

Moderator: Dr Musonda Mumba, Secretary-General of the Convention on Wetlands, (Ramsar)

Speakers:

- **Dr Sean Phillips**, Director-General, Department of Water and Sanitation, South Africa on enabling municipalities to access finance
- **Dr Diego Rodriguez**, Lead Water Economist for eastern and southern Africa, World Bank, on lessons and outcomes of two flagship regional programmes
- **Mr Mohammed Saleh Alhadi**, Vice President for Business Development and Growth, Saudi Water Partnership Company, on national level platforms for managing project pipelines
- **Amine Idriss**, Senior Director, Infrastructure and Energy, AUDA-NEPAD

Moderated by Dr Musonda Mumba, Secretary-General of the Ramsar Convention, the final plenary of the first day of the Summit explored how Africa can structure and showcase innovative finance for water. Dr Mumba reminded participants that wetlands and natural infrastructure are “at the heart of the water conversation”, linking ecosystems to financial sustainability.

Dr Sean Phillips, Director-General of South Africa's Department of Water and Sanitation, explained that although municipalities can borrow and form PPPs, “very few such partnerships are happening”. Key obstacles include governance weaknesses, fragmented accountability, and the failure to ring-fence water revenues. Dr Phillips stressed: “If municipalities secure revenue streams, banks and pension funds will be queuing up to invest, because water is one of the safest investments.”

Dr Diego Rodriguez highlighted Africa's unique challenge: declining water and sanitation services despite global progress. The World Bank's response is long-term, multi-phase commitments (10–15 years), pooling resources across countries, and tying finance to governance reforms. His call was: “Don't fix the pipes – fix the institutions that fix the pipes.”

Mohammed Saleh Alhadi of the Saudi Water Partnership Company described the Kingdom's transformation: all new desalination capital expenditure is financed by the private sector. Success rests not on money but on “governance, structure, transparency, and listening to investors”. He

urged African Ministers: “Don't look for the money – the money is there. Be transparent.”

Amine Idriss of AUDA-NEPAD underscored the need to move beyond political statements: “Investing in early project preparation is key – without it, no one will invest.” AUDA-NEPAD helps Member States translate African Union decisions into action, fix governance bottlenecks, and de-risk projects. Countries like South Africa, Rwanda, and Côte d'Ivoire show progress through national project development agencies.

Panellists converged on four principles for financing water in Africa:

- transparency;
- efficiency and institutional reform;
- getting projects right from the start; and
- recognising catchment management as part of water's true cost.

As Dr Mumba concluded, Africa must “start at the beginning, get it right, and finance both nature and infrastructure together” to avoid white elephants and build resilience.



3.2 THURSDAY, 14 AUGUST 2025

Day 2 started with a ministerial round table followed by a discussion on closing the investment gap at local level. After the two rounds of matchmaking sessions, the day concluded with a discussion on linking data and artificial intelligence (AI) with financial decision-making. In a side event, the Draft Africa Water Vision and Policy was presented, and feedback was provided by participants.

3.2.1 Ministerial round table

Topic: Ministers respond to what investors are asking: How are they de-risking the water sector? How will de-risking instruments lead to more finance? How to get more finance from improving efficiency in the sector? Has sectoral coordination led to more finance? How can the UN Water Conference elevate these matters?

Moderator: Daniel Makokera

Speakers:

- **H.E. Dr Cheikh Tidiane Dièye**, Senegal Minister of Water and Sanitation and President of AMCOW
- **H.E. Abdulla Ahmed Balalaa**, Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs for Energy and Sustainability, UAE
- **Hon. Abida Sidik Mia**, Minister of Water and Sanitation, Malawi
- **H.E. Laurent Tchagba**, Minister of Water and Forests, Côte d'Ivoire
- **Hon. Dr Eng. Habtamu Itefa Geleta**, Minister of Water and Energy, Ethiopia
- **Hon. Dr Anxious Jongwe Masuka**, Minister of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Rural Development, Zimbabwe

The ministerial round table focused on “Reflections on Investors Asks”, featuring Ministers discussing national water projects and investment strategies.

Minister Dièye mentioned the crucial importance of large-scale resilient infrastructure for the continent, especially in the context marked by climate change and rising of water demand in most cities and rural areas. He gave the example of the Groundwater Transfer Project. It aims to transfer water from Lac de Guiers in northern Senegal – a lake fed by the Senegal River – to the major urban cities on the west coast. The Grand Transfer Project is part of a larger one, the Water Highways Programme, which aims to not only secure a sustainable supply of drinking water for the largest urban areas in the country but also allow for irrigation for more than 15,000ha of farmland till 2050. This large infrastructure is climate-resilient and will also help the country to improve food security. It is being implemented through an innovative PPP since it also involves communities, civil society, local and national government, and the private sector.

Senegal has built a structured approach to de-risking investment in water through five key pillars:

1. The government pioneered contractual arrangements enabling private operators to invest in and manage services, ensuring professional governance of the sector.
2. Senegal's PPP model, particularly for urban water management, was internationally recognised with an award from the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe in Belgrade, positioning it as a best practice.
3. Modern digital tools and management systems have been introduced to improve performance and efficiency in water service delivery.
4. Strong emphasis is placed on generating robust studies and data to fully understand national water resources and inform decisions.
5. Through basin organisations, Senegal promotes shared management of the Senegal and Gambia rivers, fostering cooperation rather than competition.

This integrated approach has not only strengthened water governance and financial sustainability domestically but also serves as a model for South-South cooperation, with lessons and practices being shared through platforms such as AMCOW to support other African countries in reducing risk and scaling investment.

Minister Balalaa outlined key ingredients to unlock and de-risk financing in the water sector, drawing on the UAE's broader experience with PPPs across water, healthcare, energy, renewables, and even nuclear power.

In 2023, the UAE issued a PPP law establishing clear investment models and created investment councils under each emirate to guide investors throughout the process – from entry to contract conclusion. To further promote the ease of doing business, the government introduced incentives such as long-term off-take contracts, which

reduce investor risk and facilitate access to finance.

Beyond national borders, the UAE invests through the Abu Dhabi Fund for Development, which since 1969 has committed USD 4.5 billion specifically to water projects worldwide, with a strong footprint in Africa. These investments are backed by longstanding credibility with MDBs, international financial institutions, and partnerships with local private firms.

Finally, the UAE has signed more than 30 Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreements in the past three years, including with African countries. These agreements not only encourage capital flows but also enable knowledge exchange and regulatory harmonisation, further reducing barriers and supporting sustainable investment in the water sector.

Minister Mia mentioned that Malawi developed a climate-resilient WASH financing strategy as a tool for accelerating universal access to safe water and sanitation. The financing strategy is not just a technical document, it is a strategic planning instrument that brings clarity on the financing needs, identifies sources of financing, and aligns investment areas with national priorities, filling the gaps where needed. Financing strategies effectively signal government seriousness, readiness, and strategic intent. "The strategy also assisted Malawi to shift from reactive funding to proactive, and hence inspires investor confidence and has unlocked more financing for Malawi".

The Government of Malawi elevated Water and Sanitation into a standalone ministry, separating it from Natural Resources to ensure greater focus and efficiency. This shift unlocked delayed financing, including a USD 460 million World Bank package, which had been pending until regulatory and leadership requirements were met.

Within three months, the Ministry prioritised "low-hanging fruit" and aligned actions with World Bank and AfDB procedures, allowing funds to flow. As a result, major investments are now under way, including dam construction and large-scale urban water and sanitation projects in Lilongwe and Blantyre, featuring more than 245 km of new transmission lines.

Significant progress has also been made in reducing non-revenue water losses, supported by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) through pipeline monitoring and replacement. In addition, Malawi has mobilised USD 400 million in climate finance, backed by strong political leadership from the President, who has played a key role in securing resources.

These measures mark substantial strides in expanding water infrastructure, strengthening efficiency, and positioning Malawi to meet its long-term WASH

investment needs.

Minister Tchagba highlighted significant projects in Abidjan, emphasising strengthened water storage capacity and increased potable water production, which served 450,000 households. He stressed the importance of involving various stakeholders, as well as inter-ministerial cooperation, to effectively manage water resources and implement sustainable development initiatives.

Ethiopia's water finance strategies and the unique public financing model of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam were mentioned by Minister Geleta as a symbol of national unity and investment in infrastructure. Its potential for energy generation and regional cooperation were discussed, along with the country's openness to private investment.

He also mentioned the investment strategy, where the first priority is to improve the efficiency of systems, which is one of the core targets, and the second is to increase advocacy for higher public spending on WASH, addressing tariff reform and reducing water losses. These measures will also help attract private sector investment. However, the financing gap remains significant. Over the next 10 years, Ethiopia faces a USD 9 billion shortfall to meet WASH demand. This will require support from a mix of sources: private sector, local partners, utilities, municipalities, and government treasury allocations.

When questioned about the difficulties of doing business in Ethiopia, Minister Geleta mentioned that the present government has initiated homegrown economic growth. Safaricom from Kenya is already in Ethiopia, investing in the telecom sector. "If someone is willing to come to Ethiopia to invest especially in the water supply, the options are very easy, simple. For example, they can go for pipe productions that we are importing from abroad. The PVCs, the different kind of pipe components as well. The pumps, the water metres, the fittings. These are the ones which we demand for continuous engagement of our water supply."

Zimbabwe's water investment opportunities were highlighted by Minister Masuka. Zimbabwe presents abundant opportunities for discerning investors. It has 10,600 dams, perhaps the highest number of dams in Africa. The focus has been to craft an environment that allows the country to attract private investors because in the past it used to just be the public sector. "In Zimbabwe we have already de-risked, in that the 10,600 dams have been constructed. And the new paradigm is that a dam is an economy. So in that context we call it Infrastructure 6.0. In that you do the dam, you do hydroelectricity generation, you do irrigation water development for rural development of communities, you do potable water, that's drinking

water, and you do fisheries development and tourism, and other aspects also come into it.”

In that context, Zimbabwe has developed special economic zones spearheaded by a dedicated investment agency called the Zimbabwe Investment Development Agency, which is a one-stop centre to offer incentives for investors into the water sector. In discussion with the Minister of Finance, Economic Development and Investment Promotion, Zimbabwe made sure that anyone who wants to invest in a dam using the Infrastructure 6.0 model will automatically get a special economic zone status and a national project status to enable them to get their benefits associated with investing in such projects. For example, Zimbabwe’s biggest inland lake, Tugwi-Mukosi, which holds 1.8 billion cubic metres, was completed with a government investment of USD 320 million. “So we’ve de-risked investment for anyone who wishes to invest now

in power generation, in irrigation development, in potable water provision, in fisheries. So already we’ve taken massive steps as the Zimbabwe Government to ensure that we can attract investment.”

Preparations for the 2026 UN Water Conference were updated by Minister Dièye of Senegal and the UAE, focusing on investment, technology, and inclusive, action-oriented outcomes. Several Ministers shared insights into creating supportive environments for investment in water infrastructure, highlighting the need for political will and structural support to attract private sector partners.

These points provide a comprehensive overview of the discussions and themes addressed in the session, reflecting the ongoing challenges and potential strategies for improving water management and investment in Africa.

3.2.2 Closing the investment gap at local level

Topic: Giving voice to utility CEOs and mayors in service provision: demonstrating success cases of local governments and utilities across Africa to mobilise domestic finance and improve efficiency of services

Moderator: Mr Mtchera Johannes Chirwa – Director of Water and Sanitation, AfDB

Speakers:

- **Ms Kobie Brand**, Deputy Secretary-General and Regional Director for Africa, Local Governments for Sustainability
- **Mr Ben Mokheseng**, Head Transacting: Municipalities and Water Boards, DBSA, South Africa
- **Ms Meike van Ginneken**, Water Envoy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands
- **Mr Mbutu Mwaura**, Corporate Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Manager, Nairobi Water, Kenya

Since 2015, Africa’s progress in water and sanitation has slowed significantly. Access to basic water has grown by only 6%, down from an average of 1% annual growth between 2000 and 2015. Basic sanitation has improved by just 4% in the same period.

These modest gains are overshadowed by rapid demographic change. Africa’s population is expected to double from 1.4 billion to 2.5 billion by 2050, with large-scale rural-to-urban migration driving unprecedented pressure on cities. By mid-century, Africa is projected to have twice as many mega-cities (100 million-plus inhabitants) and more than 100 cities with populations above one million, compared with 52 today.

This explosive growth presents a time-critical challenge for water and sanitation service delivery, especially in urban areas. Addressing it requires innovative approaches in

mobilising finance for local authorities and utilities, scaling investments, and strengthening institutional capacity to meet rising demand.

The plenary session “Closing the Investment Gap at the Local Level” delved into challenges and solutions for financing water and sanitation at municipal and local government levels. Discussions addressed the complexities of decentralisation in Africa, emphasising that although local governance is critical, many municipalities lack the capacity to mobilise finances or plan effectively.

The necessity for cities to prepare “investable pipelines” that align with the expectations of financial institutions was highlighted, with a call for municipalities to adopt a more entrepreneurial mindset towards financing.

Challenges in African water access and urbanisation were presented through statistics on inadequate access and rapid demographic shifts, escalating demand in cities. The role of local governments in sustainable development was emphasised by Local Governments for Sustainability (Kobie Brand), positioning cities as “engines of change” and advocating for multilevel governance and pipeline development.

The DBSA’s (Ben Mokheseng) support for municipalities detailed its holistic approach to project development and revenue enhancement. He discussed the challenges municipalities face in securing investment because of governance issues, operational inefficiencies, and the importance of capacity building in planning and executing water projects.

As the Dutch Water Envoy, Meike van Ginneken stressed the Netherlands' integrated financing experiences and the importance of asking who pays for water rather than who finances it. She also advocated for sector-wide funding instead of project-specific approaches. The Netherlands' integrated water financing model was shared, highlighting the importance of sector-wide financing through taxes and a dedicated public water bank.

Nairobi Water's experience in mobilising local finance showcased strategies for providing services in a large, rapidly growing city, including engagement with informal settlements and output-based aid. Mbutu Mwaura addressed the complexities of financing at the city level and the need for a more collaborative approach

between local governments and investors, stressing the rapid urbanisation in Africa and the role of decentralised governance in effective service delivery.

Addressing governance and institutional capacity in the local water sector was identified as critical for attracting and utilising investment, requiring strong political and technical administration and long-term planning. The need for municipalities to develop bankable projects, understand financier expectations, and embrace various financing models was highlighted. Partnerships beyond public-private (public-public partnerships) were advocated as equally important for delivering water as a universal right at the local level.

3.2.3 Beyond financial risk: artificial intelligence and data for financial sustainability

Topic: Linking data with governance and financial decision-making: What is working and why?



Moderator: Ms Sareen Malik, Executive Secretary of the African Civil Society Network on Water and Sanitation and Vice Chair of Sanitation and Water for All

- **Mr Ramateu Lefty Mofokeng Monyokolo**, Chairperson of Rand Water and the Association of Water and Sanitation Institutions of South Africa, on AI leveraging to mitigate service delivery and financial challenges
- **Dr Alex Money**, Director of Watermarq, on using AI to value water
- **Dr Stefan Uhlenbrook**, Director of Water at the World Meteorological Organization: How can data on water resources guide critical water investments?
- **Mrs Yvonne Magawa**, Executive Secretary, Eastern

and Southern Africa Water and Sanitation Regulators Association

- **Prof. Francesco Corvaro**, Italian Government's Special Envoy for Climate Change

Starting with humour about ChatGPT "writing thank-you letters", the panel dug into how AI and data can strengthen governance, de-risk investment, and improve financial sustainability in the water sector.

Ramateu Monyokolo (Rand Water, South Africa) showed how robotic process automation, cloud computing, and AI-driven asset management cut costs, optimise chemical use, and extend infrastructure lifespans. "No investor wants to invest in inefficiency," he stressed, adding that efficiency and transparency have enabled Rand Water to raise finance directly from markets.

Dr Alex Money (Watermarq) argued that traditional volumetric pricing fails. His team is building a global database of shadow water prices using AI-assisted models that capture who uses water, where, why, and when. This approach can mobilise investment via value-reflective tariffs, incentivise efficiency, and support regulators in setting fair, transparent prices. He concluded: “We are only on day one of what AI can do to unlock investment in water.”

Dr Stefan Uhlenbrook (World Meteorological Organization) underscored that “water is not threatened by drought or pollution, but by confusion”. Reliable, open hydrological data is essential to guide USD 30 billion a year in needed investments. Artificial intelligence is now embedded across forecasting systems, but he warned: “Garbage in, garbage out – quality data remains the foundation.”

Yvonne Magawa from the Eastern and Southern Africa Water and Sanitation Regulators Association likened regulation to traffic lights: it organises the sector. Regulators are investing in geographic information system mapping, benchmarking, and shadow creditworthiness indices to attract private finance. But she cautioned and agreed with Dr Uhlenbrook: “If the data is not reliable, AI will only produce garbage.”

Prof. Francesco Corvaro, Italy’s Special Envoy for Climate Change, reminded participants that climate change is first and foremost a societal crisis: “Nature will adapt – it is our societies that are at risk.” Shifting rainfall patterns mean the same total water falls, but in shorter, more destructive bursts, demanding new, costly infrastructure to capture and manage it. He tied this directly to peace and security: “Conflicts around the world are increasingly driven by food insecurity, water scarcity, and land degradation.” Italy, through its Climate and Peace initiative launched at COP29, is investing in Africa to build water resilience and reduce instability.

Panellists converged on the following three themes:

- Transparency and data quality are prerequisites for AI to attract finance.
- AI is an equaliser: it can empower the Global South with new tools for investment and governance.
- Governments and regulators must act boldly, ring-fencing water revenues, enabling technology adoption, and ensuring affordability.

Dr Money concluded: “AI is not a silver bullet – but it is the great unlock for our continent.”

3.3 FRIDAY, 15 AUGUST 2025

Day 3 started with the fourth and final round of matchmaking sessions. The plenary sessions focused on looking ahead and showcasing examples of the investment pledges and commitments made.

3.3.1 Looking ahead – investment pledges and potential commitments

Topic: Announcement of two winning projects by the youth and announcements by Ministers and investors who wish to showcase their investment pledges

Moderator: Teresa Chirwa-Ndanga, Head of Communications, Global Water Partnership Southern Africa (GWPSA)

Speakers:

- **Hon. David Mahlobo**, Deputy Minister of Water and Sanitation, South Africa
- **Hon. Inge Zaamwani**, Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Land Reform, Namibia
- **Hon. Mr Ezzeddine Ben Cheikh**, Ministère de l’Agriculture, des Ressources Hydrauliques et de la Pêche, Tunisia
- **Ms Sumbi Shimwambwa**, Water and Sanitation Finance Specialist, AUDA-NEPAD on Outcomes of project matchmaking sessions and what’s next
- **Mr Mtchera Johannes Chirwa**, Director of Water and Sanitation, AfDB

- **Dr Juste Nansi**, Director Africa Hub, IRC
- **Dr Alex Money**, University of Oxford, Director of Watermarq
- **Jaehyang So**, Chair of the GWP Technical Committee
- **Dr M.J. Wengawenga**, Deputy Director of Policy and Planning, Ministry of Water and Sanitation, Malawi
- **Sten Schurer**, Implementation Manager, Blue Africa Action, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)

The final day of the AU-AIP Africa Water Investment Summit in Cape Town opened with moderator Teresa Chirwa-Ndanga (GWPSA). After three intense days of deliberations, negotiations, and project pitches, leaders and participants gathered to reflect on achievements and commit to next steps.

Ms Ndanga summarised the journey: “We started with

the highest political commitment for water investments in Africa. We went on to discuss very pertinent issues around what challenges we face ... why investors are not as much as we may want them to be in the water sector. We discussed AI. We also looked at domestic finance and what we can do by ourselves within our countries.”

A highlight of the Summit was the AU-AIP Youth Water Investment Hackathon, coordinated by Albain Tchangou (GWP Youth Coordinator). He emphasised: “This wasn’t just a workshop, it was a challenge-based innovation journey ... a proof of concept that when we invest in young people, we unlock more practical and sustainable solutions.”

In the course of three days, six innovative ideas were developed by African youth teams, tackling governance, irrigation, accountability, and cross-border water collaboration. Two projects rose to the top:

- The runner-up team was BukaAmanzi from the University of Cape Town – a digital transparency tool linking government water infrastructure data with communities. Their pitch highlighted the lived reality of broken promises: “Months turn into years, budgets shift, contractors change ... yet not a single droplet flows through that water pipeline. This is not just a delay, it is their reality.” The platform provides real-time dashboards and community reporting, with the aim of restoring trust.
- The winning team was Stellenbosch University (AquaLink) – a real-time water quality monitoring system using algae biosensors connected to Internet of Things devices. The team stressed accountability and cooperation: “Currently around 50% of clean water is lost annually. Our system creates real data that users can interact with in real time, thereby increasing accountability of government and industry, while promoting transboundary cooperation.”

The youth projects were met with enthusiastic applause. Certificates were awarded by Hon. Pemmy Majodina and fellow African Ministers in a vibrant ceremony. Ndanga captured the sentiment: “We may call ourselves champions of water, but the real champions are the young ones, to whom we will pass on the baton.”

The plenary then turned to firm commitments from African governments emerging from the three days of deliberations.

South Africa (Hon. David Mahlobo, Deputy Minister)

Declared “South Africa is open for water business”, announcing reforms to separate utilities, introduce performance-based contracts, and expand blended finance through the DBSA. He cited more than ZAR 100

billion in projects under preparation, including Lesotho Highlands Phase II and major pipelines in Limpopo and the Northern Cape. Licensing reforms now allow water use permits within 90 days instead of years.

Namibia (Hon. Inge Zaamwani, Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Land Reform)

Highlighted the country’s scarcity challenges: “Between Namibia and Botswana we are competing for who is the driest country.” Namibia has earmarked 5% of its national budget for water and sanitation, equivalent to N\$ 6 billion, with cofinancing from AfDB and KfW Development Bank. Flagship projects include a coastal desalination plant developed as a PPP and feasibility studies for the Noordoewer Dam with South Africa.

Tunisia (Hon. Ezzeddine Ben Cheikh, Minister of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Water)

Outlined a 2050 water strategy requiring USD 24 billion, of which USD 3.7 billion has already been invested. Reforms include tariff adjustments, reducing network losses, wastewater reuse for irrigation, and innovative solutions such as floating solar panels to reduce evaporation. Tunisia will cover 15% of costs domestically while seeking international investors.

Together, these pledges demonstrated a strong recognition that public financing alone cannot close Africa’s USD 30 billion annual water investment gap, making partnerships and governance reforms essential.

Malawi (M.J. Wengawenga, Deputy Director of Policy and Planning, Ministry of Water and Sanitation)

Pledged to “extend our contribution towards the budget in the water and sanitation sector” in the next fiscal year, noting that Malawi has moved from ~0.5% of GDP to 1.1% and is targeting 1.5% of GDP for the sector. Reported that ~90% of Malawi’s pitched projects met or exceeded investor criteria (impact, national alignment, readiness, institutional frameworks) and committed to keep strengthening preparation/readiness (including safeguards and, where appropriate, sovereign guarantees).

Confirmed an investor mission to Malawi “next week” to progress at least one of the presented projects and reaffirmed Malawi’s commitment to joint, transboundary development, citing collaboration with Tanzania on the Lower Songwe River multipurpose dam and other regional efforts.

Matchmaking sessions outcomes

Ms Sumbi Shimwambwa (AUDA-NEPAD), reported on the matchmaking sessions: 80 projects showcased from 38 countries, worth USD 32 billion in (mostly) capital

expenditure, with USD 15.9 billion sought in investment.

Key lesson: “Partially financed projects served as a clear signal of momentum and reduced perceived risk.” Outcomes included financing commitments, bridging studies, and technical support. The process will continue at the Luanda Financing Summit (October 2025) and towards the UN 2026 Water Conference.

Several institutions then announced follow-up actions:

AfDB: Identified 27 projects worth USD 2.8 billion for potential financing. Mr Chirwa reiterated its pledge of USD 12 billion in water investments (2021–2030), including USD 7 billion for sanitation and a new initiative to strengthen utilities: “This cannot be allowed to continue, losing half of the water produced.”

IRC/Africa Hub: Mr Nansi announced the All Systems Symposium Africa (Kigali, July 2026) to tackle governance, efficiency, and resource mobilisation. The focus of this symposium will be almost exclusively on the “bottom of the pyramid of transformation” because “the issue is not lack of funds. It is the lack of trust from financiers in the water sector. We want to see matchmaking happening but around sector reforms and improved efficiency, and involve the startups in the Continent that can accelerate these processes.” Mr Nansi requested partnerships with the AIP, the AU, the Government of Rwanda, and the Government of South Africa to support the event.

Global Water Partnership/Oxford University: Mr Money unveiled a Water and Climate Leadership Programme to train 500 professionals by 2030 and improve data for 60 countries, under a new memorandum of understanding with Oxford University and Watermarq.

GIZ/Blue Africa Action: Committed that, under Blue Africa Action, GIZ will support five African Member States to develop National Water Investment Plans and Resource Mobilisation Strategies aimed at securing sustainable, long-term financing for their water sectors. Mr Schurer confirmed this will be done in close cooperation with the AU’s AIP and the European Investment Bank’s Multi-Country Readiness Programme, leveraging Team Europe’s coordinated approach. Mr Schurer situated the commitment within the broader Team Europe Initiative on Transboundary Water Management in Africa, which already encompasses 51 projects, and noted GIZ’s implementation partnership with the AUC and AMCOW.

In closing, Ms Ndanga reminded participants: “We need investors, we need the private sector, we need everyone to join hands so that we take water investments to the next level.” The session illustrated the Summit’s dual legacy: concrete financial pledges and youth-driven innovation. Ministers recognised that reforms and accountability are prerequisites for investment, while institutions signalled readiness to cofinance and provide technical support.

3.3.2 Financing Africa’s water future: catalysing investment and partnerships on the road to the 2026 UN Water Conference

Topic: High-level panel, followed by an interactive discussion with the audience to gather perspectives on barriers and solutions to accelerate water investments in Africa, and recommendations for tangible results to showcase at the 2026 UN Water Conference



Moderator: Richard Matikanya, Deputy Executive Director Africa, Children’s Investment Fund Foundation

Speakers:

- **H.E. Abdulla Ahmed Balalaa**, Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs for Energy and Sustainability, UAE Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- **Dr Mohamed Diatta (Senegal)**, Coordination Team, 2026 UN Water Conference
- **Hon. Dr Eng. Habtamu Itefa Geleta**, Minister of Water and Energy, Ethiopia
- **Hon. William F. Duguid**, Minister of Planning and Development, Prime Minister’s Office, Barbados
- **Amine Idriss, Senior Director**, Infrastructure and Energy, AUDA NEPAD
- **Mr Mtchera Johannes Chirwa**, Director of Water and Sanitation, AfDB
- **Ms Sareen Malik**, Executive Secretary of the African Civil Society Network on Water and Sanitation and Vice Chair of Sanitation and Water for All

This high-level session focused on ensuring that the AU-AIP Africa Water Investment Summit is not a one-off event but a stepping stone towards the 2026 UN Water Conference, to be co-hosted by the UAE and Senegal.

H.E. Abdulla Ahmed Balalaa (UAE) underlined the urgency: “Water investments are no longer a secondary issue. They are fundamental to sustainable development, climate resilience, economic prosperity, and global stability.” He highlighted the global USD 6.7 trillion investment gap, including USD 30 billion annually in Africa alone, stressing: “Behind every missing dollar are real human costs – women and girls missing school, farmers without reliable flows, communities with failing infrastructure.” He called for “practical, tangible deliverables” for 2026, emphasising that investments must include not just finance but also technology, innovation, and capacity building.

Dr Mohamed Diatta (Senegal) framed the 2026 Conference as a historic milestone: “We must stop treating water as a secondary variable. Water is a common good, a pillar of ecological balance, a driver of social justice, a tool for conflict prevention, and a foundation for economic prosperity.” He announced that Senegal will host a high-level preparatory meeting in Dakar in January 2026 to consolidate objectives and build shared ambition.

Minister Geleta of Ethiopia stressed political will, clear policies, community engagement, and fair tariffs. “People must pay for the water they use – but it must remain affordable.”

Minister Duguid of Barbados shared the country’s

innovative “debt-for-climate swap”, mobilising USD 125 million for sewage treatment and aquifer recharge. “Don’t be afraid to think outside the box. Water is life.”

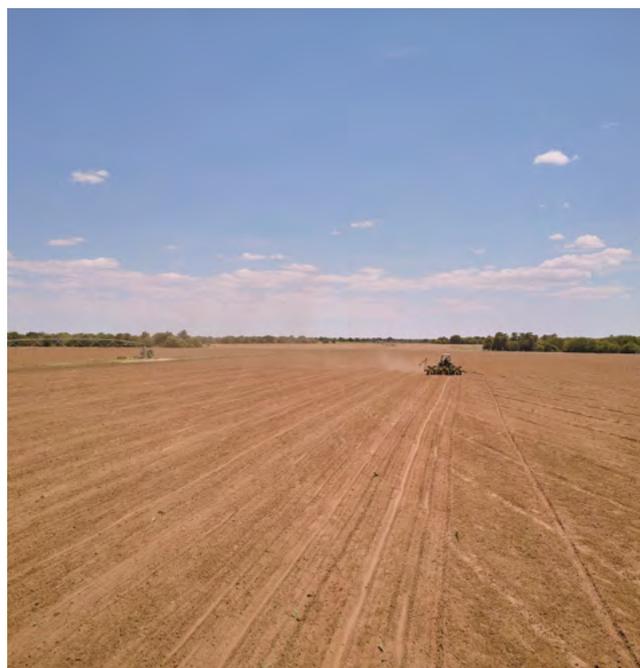
Amine Idriss from AUDA-NEPAD emphasised upstream project preparation and de-risking. “The challenge is making development investable – technically sound, commercially viable, and socially inclusive.”

Cross-cutting messages included:

- No single MDB can finance these projects alone. “Given Africa’s scale of needs, it’s either go big or go home.”
- The importance of AI and data for efficiency and accountability, with caution about governance failures undermining progress.
- Calls to integrate sanitation, tackle water pollution, and ensure civil society and youth voices are strongly represented.
- Recognition that “promises made must be promises kept”.

Key takeaways:

- From commitments to impact, concrete, monitorable deliverables must define 2026.
- Collaboration is essential – across MDBs, private sector, governments, and civil society.
- Inclusivity is vital, ensuring voices of communities, youth and civil society are heard.
- Water quality and sanitation must be central to investment strategies.
- There must be less rhetoric and more action. “It’s not easy, but we must go big, together.”



MATCHMAKING SESSIONS AT THE AU-AIP AFRICA WATER INVESTMENT SUMMIT 2025



Mr Elias Chimlambe, Principal Secretary for the Ministry of Water and Sanitation, Malawi, listening to the Malawi delegation presenting two projects.

The AU-AIP Africa Water Investment Summit 2025 held matchmaking sessions, positioning them as a central pillar for achieving two of the Summit's objectives:

- (i) to mobilise financial commitments towards Africa's water investment needs; and
- (ii) to showcase a pipeline of investment-ready projects.

The sessions recognised the three critical pathways outlined in the AIP Investment Action Plan for mobilising finance in the development of the showcased pipeline. They ensured that the pipeline included sector governance projects and mobilised service providers and political participants to pitch projects aimed at attracting both domestic and continental/global finance. For instance, the Malawian delegation at the matchmaking sessions had the Mr. Elias Chimlambe Principal Secretary for the Ministry of Water and Sanitation in attendance. The sessions provided a platform for the project-implementing entities (project owners), investors, and strategic partners through a marketplace.

4.1 INVESTMENT PIPELINE

The Summit showcased more than 80 transformative projects drawn from a final pool of 90 projects, 16 being

regional projects spanning 38 countries. This represents approximately 70% of Africa's geographic footprint in terms of participation. The total capital expenditure of the pipeline stood at USD 32 billion, with an investment ask of USD 15.9 billion. Project sizes ranged from USD 0.8 million to USD 1.5 billion, submitted by ministries, water boards, non-governmental organisations, and project preparation facilities such as the SADC Water Fund and the African Water Facility. The portfolio was diverse, covering subsectors such as water supply and sanitation, multipurpose water infrastructure, flood management, early warning systems, aquaculture, integrated water resources management, nature-based solutions, energy efficiency, traditional knowledge and conflict management, and water transport. The pipeline was made available to targeted financiers from 1 August 2025, two weeks ahead of the Summit, to allow for familiarisation of projects through the detailed information provided ahead of time in project fiches. This pipeline is still available on the Summit website, allowing for easier follow-up after the matchmaking sessions.

The projects came from existing project pipelines, partner institutions of the steering committee, and a call for projects. A rigorous selection process ensured that projects

met baseline preparation standards, thereby increasing the likelihood of meaningful engagement with investors.

Because of the limited availability in terms of space to showcase the projects, through this selection process many projects could not be added to the pipeline. This underscores the great need for such investment platforms. Extensive preparatory activities underpinned the success. These included the preparation of project fiches and PowerPoint presentations for each of the projects showcased; including a project owners' briefing on 5 August 2025; one-on-one moderator orientation sessions for the ten moderators; and three optional investor briefings from 6–8 August 2025, aimed at mobilising additional financing institutions to those that had already registered and also at aligning expectations on the matchmaking sessions.

The pipeline was developed through a joint effort by Global Water Partnership-Southern Africa, AUDA-NEPAD, AfDB, and the Department of Water and Sanitation of the Republic of South Africa. As pipeline lead developer, AUDA-NEPAD presented the outcomes in Plenary 7 on the last day, reaffirming the sessions' importance in consolidating partnerships and accelerating the continent's water investment agenda.

4.2 STRUCTURE OF THE MATCHMAKING SESSIONS

The Summit hosted four matchmaking sessions across the three days, each being one hour and 30 minutes long. Each matchmaking session held five parallel rooms that showcased four projects at a given time.

The sessions followed a structured process to maximise impact. Each began with an introduction by a high-level moderator, followed by concise country or project presentations supported by PowerPoint slides and project fiches printed out on A1 posters and mounted next to the discussion tables. The central component of the sessions detailed interactions in which investors rotated across project tables every ten minutes to meet project teams. Twenty rapporteurs tracked outcomes of the sessions and some of these are shared as key highlights of the report as Annex 1. Five youth volunteers from the University of Cape Town also supported the delivery of the sessions.

Throughout the three days, rooms remained open for extended dialogue and informal follow-ups. The team also helped facilitate meetings between financiers and project owners outside the matchmaking format, such as (1) the meeting between AfDB and the Ministry of Water and Sanitation delegation from Mozambique (2) the meeting between the Minister from Zimbabwe and project owners for four different projects that originated from Zimbabwe

or developed in partnership with other countries.

4.3 OBSERVATIONS AND OUTCOMES

The matchmaking sessions realised several tangible outcomes. The sessions mobilised the investors, providing a rare opportunity for project owners to engage them on the projects being presented. Investor participation included MDBs, commercial banks, climate funds, bilateral organisations, capital groups, philanthropic groups, advisory firms, and engineering firms. Project preparation facilities also showcased their own pipelines and engaged in mobilising co-investment, signalling a readiness not only to finance but to work collaboratively to scale up water investments across the continent. For instance, the AfDB's Director of Water and Sanitation, Mr Mtchera Chirwa, shared in his speech of the closing plenary that based on the preliminary review, the bank had identified about 27 operations that fit very well within its operations for the next few years, with a financing envelope of USD 2.8 billion.

Similarly, in a closing plenary, a selected project owner, Dr Max Wengawenga from the Ministry of Water and Sanitation, Malawi, whose delegation had the opportunity to present both national and multinational projects, shared that moments of regional solidarity had been witnessed. Malawi joined hands with Tanzania to showcase a project and Namibia did the same with South Africa. He further shared that valuable feedback had been received, noting that investors were seeking projects that demonstrate impact, are aligned with national priorities, show readiness, deliver tangible results, have sound institutional frameworks, and can be backed by sovereign guarantees. He shared that further engagements took place outside the matchmaking sessions and that Malawi was expecting an investor to visit Malawi in the week beginning 18 August 2025.

Furthermore, Namibia's Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Land Reform, Honourable Ingenesia Zaamwani, said that Namibia had jointly pitched the Noordoewer/Vioolsdrift Dam Development Project with South Africa, and that they managed to secure USD 1 million. She said that public finance alone is not enough and that Namibia was advancing PPPs as core to the water security strategy.

Of interest are the two key observations made:

- (i) Projects with partial financing in place attracted greater investor interest, as they reduced perceived risks and signalled momentum.
- (ii) Large infrastructure projects gained consistent attention, though the sessions also emphasised the need

to support smaller subsectors such as energy efficiency and governance-related improvements, which are critical to closing Africa's water investment gap.

The key outcomes are as follows:

I. Feedback from investors provided project owners with practical guidance to strengthen proposals and advance towards bankability.

II. The sessions significantly strengthened relationships between governments, project developers, and financiers, building trust and laying the foundation for long-term collaboration.

III. The sessions realised several commitments for continued engagements. This included pledges to conduct immediate due diligence, support bridging studies to address critical gaps, and explore cofinancing structures involving MDBs, bilateral agencies, and impact funds.

4.4 ROAD MAP AND NEXT STEPS FOR THE INVESTMENT PIPELINE

The AU-AIP Secretariat will continue to consolidate outcomes of the Summit and track progress through the use of the AIP-PIDA Water Investment Scorecard. The consolidated outcomes will be presented at the UN 2026 Water Conference. It is envisaged that more advanced projects that attract financing will continue to be supported and showcased at various forums, maintaining momentum towards the second AU-AIP Africa Water Investment Summit, to be held in four years. This road map ensures that promising projects are nurtured towards financial closure while remaining visible within Africa's broader development and finance agenda.

4.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

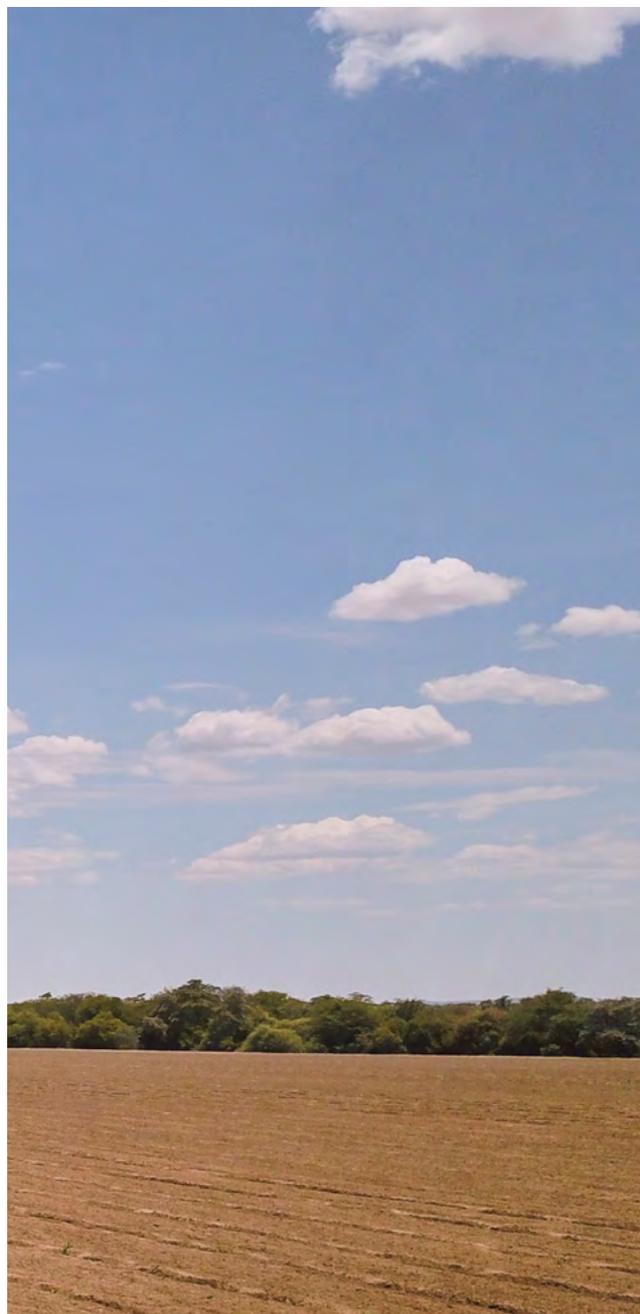
The process of developing the pipeline and delivering the matchmaking sessions brought about many lessons that may be critical for the upcoming investment summits, which it was agreed will be held every four years on a rotational basis across Africa.

i. There is a need to start the project selection process early to allow enough time to curate the projects for showcasing and to facilitate meaningful engagement between project owners and investors.

ii. Identify a lead partner institution to spearhead private sector engagement and mobilise a broader range of investors, particularly impact funders seeking to support projects that prioritise social and ecological benefits alongside, or even above, financial returns. This is critical for the success of the matchmaking sessions.

iii. Showcase the right number of projects to avoid crowding out investors.

The matchmaking sessions at the AU-AIP Africa Water Investment Summit 2025 successfully provided a structured, inclusive, and high-level platform for dialogue between project owners and financiers. In presenting the outcomes to plenary, AUDA-NEPAD highlighted strengthened relationships, constructive investor feedback, and concrete commitments for further engagement. These outcomes demonstrated not only the readiness of African countries to attract investment into water projects but also the willingness of financiers to respond positively where projects are well prepared. The sessions laid the foundation for sustained investment mobilisation, reinforcing Africa's path towards closing the water financing gap and securing climate-resilient water infrastructure for the continent. **(See Annex 4 for matchmaking session highlights of the outcomes for 25 projects.)**

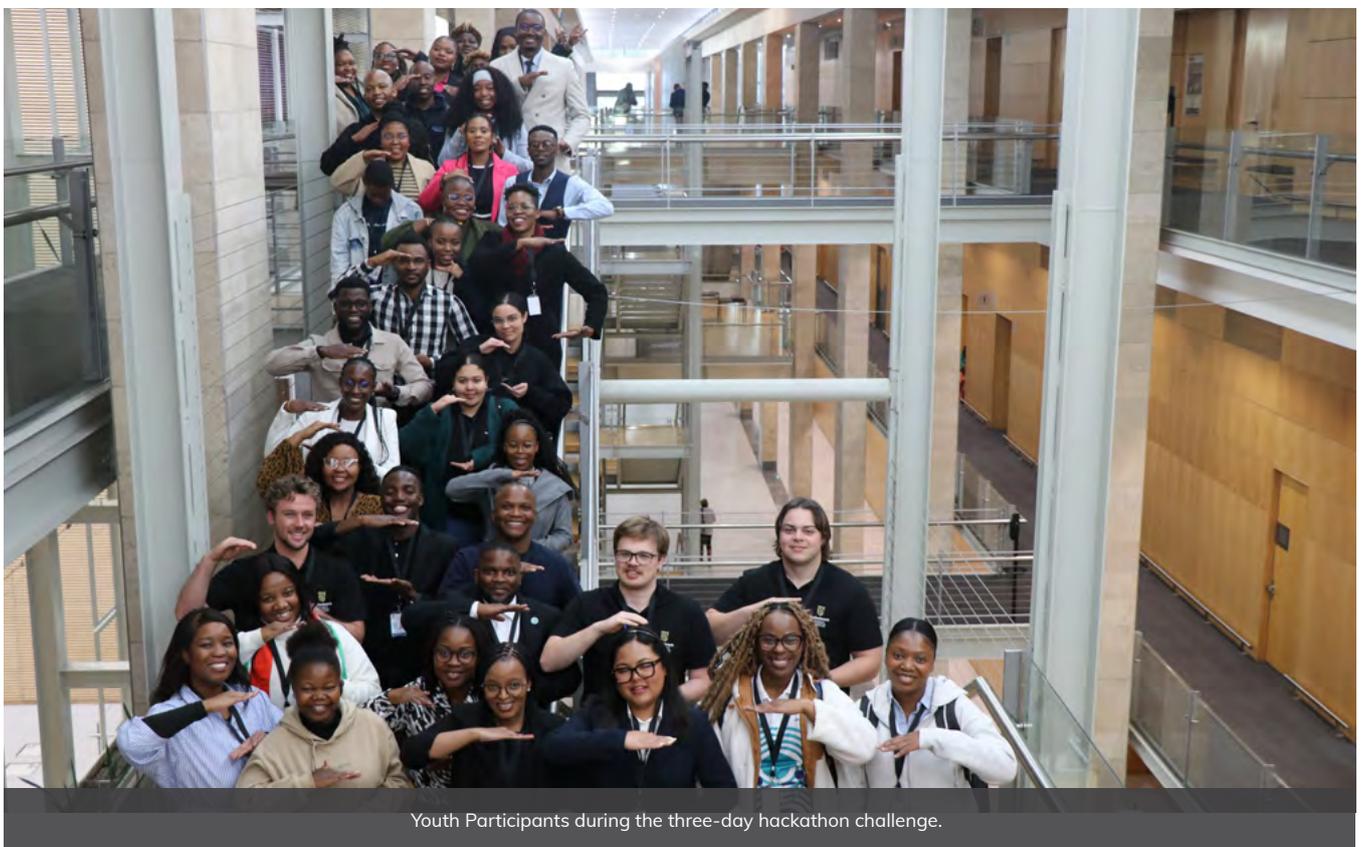




YOUTH WATER INVESTMENT TRACK

The AU-AIP Africa Water Investment Summit involved Youth Water Investment Track, which hosted a three-day hackathon challenge. The hackathon aimed to inspire and engage aspiring young people to find sustainable solutions and develop investment opportunities that span water infrastructure, sanitation, irrigation, hydropower, and institutional capacity. Through collaboration and creative problem-solving, 28 young participants were encouraged to develop water-related business ideas that have a positive social and environmental impact.

The young people were divided into five teams for the hackathon. The sessions included periods of intensive groupwork, peer exchange, mentor guidance, opportunities for team-building activities, and social activities to help the young innovators interact with one another. The hackathon was designed to be interactive. The five groups worked in teams to develop solutions to address issues regarding water infrastructure, sanitation, irrigation, hydropower, and institutional capacity, with coaches available to guide them through the exercises and check in throughout the innovation journey.



Youth Participants during the three-day hackathon challenge.

5.1 MAIN OBJECTIVE

The main objective of the Youth Water Investment Track was to equip the young participants with key competencies to work together in a semi-facilitated innovation journey to turn a water challenge into a solution that they had to pitch and present during the Summit for feedback and acceleration.

5.1.1 Specific Objectives

- Demonstrate an understanding and application of an innovative and entrepreneurial mindset.
- Select and apply adequate methods and tools for working in the ideation stages of innovative development.
- Contribute one's disciplinary expertise during the ideation stage of the innovation process.
- Create a business presentation and make a pitch.
- Give constructive and appropriate feedback to, and receive it from, team members and other teams.
- Communicate the design of a fitting innovation concept with the problem at hand to relevant stakeholders.
- Present and drive forward ideas at an international summit.



Team members from the Department of Water and Sanitation of South Africa.

5.2 HACKATHON CHALLENGES

Challenge 1: Water Watch – A Transparency Tool for Local Water Projects

Theme: Governance and Accountability

Goal: Design a digital tool (web or mobile) that allows communities to track the progress, budget, and impact of local water infrastructure projects.

Challenge 2: RiverRevive – A Community-driven River Basin Restoration Model

Theme: Ecosystem Restoration and Community Engagement

Goal: Develop a scalable, youth-led business and education model that mobilises local communities, especially high-school learners and their parents, to actively participate in the restoration and sustainable management of depleted river basins. The model should integrate environmental education, agroecology, and circular economy principles to ensure long-term impact.

Challenge 3: Pitch2Invest – A Youth-led Water Startup Pitch Toolkit

Theme: Investment Readiness and Financing

Goal: Create a toolkit or template that helps youth-led water startups prepare compelling investment pitches for donors, banks, or accelerators.

Challenge 4: AquaLink – A Cross-border Water Data Sharing Platform

Theme: Transboundary Water Collaboration

Goal: Develop a comprehensive platform with a data sovereignty framework that enables two or more regions/countries to share water data (e.g. river levels, usage, rainfall) for joint planning.

Challenge 5: SmartDrop – A Low-cost Irrigation Planner for Small Farmers.

Theme: Climate-resilient Irrigation

Goal: Design a simple decision-support tool that helps smallholder farmers plan irrigation schedules based on weather forecasts and crop needs.



Coaches and facilitators supporting the 5 Groups taking part in the 3 day challenge.

5.3 THE TEAMS

Each team was unique, combining different disciplines, cultures, and perspectives. Each team was required to appoint a Team Lead (presenter). They had to work together to develop a solution. The details of all five teams are below.

Team 1: BukaAmanzi – University of Cape Town

Their solution, BukaAmanzi, is a digital transparency tool designed to bridge the gap between government water infrastructure data and community awareness. The platform uses APIs to extract project data and presents it through a user-friendly dashboard, enabling citizens to track progress and budgets, and provide feedback. It empowers communities with real-time insights and fosters accountability in local water governance.

Team 2: Stellenbosch University – AquaLink

Their innovation is a real-time water quality data platform using biosensors and Internet of Things technology. By monitoring CO₂ fluctuations in algae-bacteria biofilms, their system detects pollution before it impacts ecosystems or public health. The platform integrates chemical and hydrological data across borders, enabling collaborative water management through a shared dashboard accessible to multiple African nations.

Team 3: Hydrosync – water accountability

Hydrosync addresses the lack of real-time visibility in municipal water infrastructure projects. It features an interactive dashboard with project maps, budget breakdowns, and status updates. Citizens can report issues, upload photos, and track progress via mobile, web, USSD, or WhatsApp. The platform also includes tools for petitions, whistleblower reporting, and impact storytelling – making it not just a monitoring tool but also a catalyst for civic action and accountability.

Team 4: RiverRevive – scientists with solutions

Their concept introduces “River Stewardship Hubs” – school-based initiatives that empower learners and their families to restore local river ecosystems. The model blends traditional ecological knowledge with modern tools such as mobile-based data collection and integrates agroecological training in composting, agroforestry, and riverbank restoration. To ensure sustainability, the team incorporates circular economy principles, enabling families to launch microenterprises that turn waste into ecobricks, biofertilisers, and low-cost irrigation tools. Each hub adopts a stretch of river for clean-up, reforestation, and public engagement through storytelling, art, and science.

This model is designed to be modular, replicable, and deeply rooted in community structures, laying the foundation for a continent-wide youth movement in river restoration and green livelihoods.

Team 5: AquaLinkers – University of the Western Cape

Representing the University of the Western Cape, the AquaLinkers team tackled Challenge 4: AquaLink – A Cross-border Water Data Sharing Platform. Their solution proposes a unified, AI-enhanced platform for real-time groundwater data sharing across African nations. Recognising the fragmentation in existing databases such as AquaKnow and the Southern African Development Community Groundwater Management Institute, the team aims to harmonise data models, metrics, and protocols to enable consistent and collaborative groundwater monitoring.



5.4 OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE YOUTH WATER INVESTMENT TRACK

The official launch of the Youth Water Investment Track spotlighted the critical role of youth in shaping Africa's water investment future. Opening remarks were delivered by Ms Dina Ramaromandray, Youth Representative on the GWPSA Board of Directors.

A panel discussion, led by the Bremen Overseas Research and Development Association South Africa, explored how young innovators are tackling Africa's water, sanitation, and climate challenges through entrepreneurship, digital innovation, and policy engagement.

This was followed by two presentations: Shalongo Angula introduced the "problem-solution-impact" approach to guide youth in developing their final projects, while Craig Tanyanyiwa presented the Business Model Canvas, focusing on investment readiness.

Panelists included the following:

I. Shamil Tumisang Agosi – Square Gate Group, Managing Director

An environmental, social, and governance consultant and social entrepreneur, Agosi is passionate about creating solutions to community challenges. She advocates for the AU Youth Charter, Agenda 2063, and the SDGs, and is recognised for her leadership, transparency, and commitment to environmental sustainability and youth development.

II. Mookho Mathaba – DBSA, Climate Finance Specialist

Mathaba champions sustainable development through climate finance at DBSA. Her work integrates gender, environmental, and social aspects into infrastructure projects, promoting a just transition. She is committed to protecting nature and fostering inclusive, low-carbon development across Africa.

III. Mfanelo S'phelele Calvin Ndlela – iLambu Global, Board Executive

Founder of Electri-Coal Technologies and inventor of the VOLUTAIRE® Smart Water Management System, Ndlela is a pioneer in renewable energy and smart utilities. He has led award-winning innovations and signed a major collaboration with uMngeni-uThukela Water. As an Advisory Board Member of iLambu Global, he helps shape the Next Generation Digital Action programme.

Key themes from the panel discussion included:

- Youth as Catalysts for Climate-resilient Water Solutions;
- From Global Exposure to Local Impact;
- Investment Readiness and Innovation Pathways; and
- Partnerships for Scale.

Leading the discussion was Mendy Zibuyile Shozi, a WASH professional with a master's degree in environmental science who is serving as Project Manager for the Bremen Overseas Research and Development Association South Africa office.

5.5 MENTOR CLINIC AND PITCH PREP

Young people had an opportunity to engage with Mr Henk Ovink, Executive Director and founding Commissioner of the Global Commission on the Economics of Water. In March 2015, Mr Ovink was appointed by the Dutch Cabinet as the first-ever Special Envoy for International Water Affairs, serving as the Kingdom of the Netherlands' global water ambassador.

In his address to the young people, he shared his experience in this role as he championed global water awareness, built coalitions across governments, multilateral institutions, private sectors, and NGOs, and spearheaded transformative water initiatives.

During the Mentor World Café session, seven coaches and mentors worked with each of the five teams.

The groups had the opportunity to speed-pitch to the mentors, and each team had up to five minutes to share their concept and receive feedback from the mentors. This was done on a rotation basis.



Mr Henk Ovink, Executive Director and founding Commissioner of the Global Commission on the Economics.

5.6 OFFICIAL PITCH SESSION

Five teams had the opportunity to present their innovations.

Adjudicators had to focus on the three tiers mentioned below when marking the teams:

- **Tier 1:** Relevance, creativity, and strategic fit.
- **Tier 2:** Technical soundness, impact potential, stakeholder awareness.
- **Tier 3:** Pitch quality, business model clarity, team dynamics.

5.7 ANNOUNCEMENT OF TOP TWO INNOVATIONS

On the final day of the hackathon, during the plenary session, the top two innovations out of the five teams were announced.

The winning solutions were:

1. Team Stellenbosch
2. BukaAmanzi

Additionally, all the participants and coaches received a certificate of participation that was awarded to them by the Minister of Water and Sanitation of South Africa and other Ministers in attendance.

This hackathon was more than a youth programme. It was a proof of concept that when we invest in young people, we unlock bold, practical, and scalable solutions. It is a call to action for all of us to mainstream youth inclusion in water investment strategies, not as a side note, but as a central pillar of Africa's development agenda.

The youth participants during the three days of the challenge showcased what is possible when courage meets creativity. These innovators are not just the leaders of tomorrow, they are the co-creators of today's solutions. And they need support to take their concepts into investable ventures. That is why young people are calling on the AIP partners to support platforms like this, where intergenerational collaboration drives innovation, solidarity, equity, and sustainability.



Youths pose for a photo with African Ministers of Water and Sanitation.

More photos of the event can be found here: <https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjCrBK1>

OFFICIAL CLOSING SESSION

The official closing session of the AU-AIP Africa Water Investment Summit 2025 was done by H.E. Commissioner Moses Vilakati of the AUC, accompanied by H.E. Jakaya Kikwete, former president of Tanzania and Co-Chair of

the High-Level Panel on Water Investments for Africa. The session was moderated by the host minister, Hon. Pemmy Majodina, South Africa's Minister of Water and Sanitation.



Hon. Pemmy Majodina, South Africa's Minister of Water and Sanitation moderated the closing session.

6.1 VIDEO MESSAGE BY H.E. RETNO MARSUDI, UNITED NATIONS SPECIAL ENVOY ON WATER



In her message, H.E. Retno Marsudi, UN Special Envoy on Water, congratulated African leaders and partners for successfully convening the Water Investment Summit, calling it a historic turning point for advancing sustainable development through water. She stressed that “when we talk about water, Africa must never be forgotten”, urging strong political commitment, innovation, and persistence to drive water investments at scale.

Highlighting the Africa Water Investment Pipeline as a key outcome of the Summit, she noted its potential to mobilise more than USD 30 billion in planned investments, with impacts extending beyond water and sanitation to climate

resilience, food security, and socioeconomic development.

The Water Envoy emphasised that the Summit is only the beginning, urging leaders and stakeholders to turn commitments into lasting impact. Accepting her role as a Champion for Water Investment under the Global Outlook Council and Global Water Investment Platform (GIP), she pledged to advocate for robust and sustainable investment in water – covering finance, political will, institutional capacity, and cooperation.

She closed by reaffirming the UN’s commitment to work with all partners to accelerate action and unlock opportunities for Africa’s water future.

6.2 H.E. JAKAYA KIKWETE, FORMER PRESIDENT OF TANZANIA AND ALTERNATE CO-CHAIR OF THE AU-AIP INTERNATIONAL HIGH-LEVEL PANEL ON WATER INVESTMENTS FOR AFRICA



President Kikwete expressed gratitude to the Government and people of South Africa for their warm hospitality and excellent organisation of the first-ever Africa Water Investment Summit. He also commended the AU, technical partners, and the Secretariat for their role in making the Summit a success.

He highlighted that the Summit achieved its objective of moving from commitments to concrete investments, with more than 80 priority projects showcased through four matchmaking rounds, linking African project sponsors with financiers. He emphasised that this is how bankable projects are built, “project by project, country by country”.

President Kikwete applauded President Cyril Ramaphosa for launching the Global Outlook Council on Water Investments and Global Water Investment Platform (GIP), describing it as a landmark G20 initiative to mobilise capital at scale, align policies, and track progress through tools such as the AIP-PIDA Water Investment Scorecard.

He stressed that the Summit is only the beginning, urging participants to sustain momentum into upcoming global platforms – the Africa Climate Summit, the Africa Finance Summit, the 2026 UN Water Conference in Senegal, and the 2027 World Water Forum in Saudi Arabia.

President Kikwete called for national pledges to become financing programmes, and for programmes to deliver real services to communities. He underscored the importance of blended finance, strong institutions, and country ownership.

He closed by saluting Heads of State, Ministers, development partners, financiers, utilities, youth, and women for their commitment and innovation, saying: “Investing in water is possible, and investing in water is investing in Africa’s future.”



6.3 ADOPTION OF THE FINAL DECLARATION AND OFFICIAL CLOSING BY H.E. MOSES VILAKATI, AU COMMISSIONER FOR AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, BLUE ECONOMY AND SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT



Officially closing the Summit, Commissioner Vilakati, speaking on behalf of the Chairperson of the AUC, expressed gratitude to President Cyril Ramaphosa, the Government, and the people of South Africa for their hospitality and leadership in hosting the first-ever Africa Water Investment Summit.

He highlighted the Summit's achievements, including the showcasing of 80 priority projects from 38 countries, with projected investments of at least USD 10–12 billion annually through public and private participation. He noted that additional pledges were expected in the coming weeks via an online portal, making the total even higher.

Vilakati underscored that the Summit was not just a gathering but also a call to action, aimed at closing Africa's USD 30 billion annual water investment gap. He stressed that water must remain a top priority, central to human dignity, economic opportunities, climate resilience, and peace, especially for women, children, and communities sharing transboundary water systems.

Key milestones from the Summit included the launch of the Global Outlook Council on Water Investments and Global Water Investment Platform (GIP) under South Africa's G20 Presidency, the advancement of the Africa Water Vision and Policy in line with Agenda 2063, and the adoption of a Summit Declaration committing

to scaled-up investments, improved governance, and accountability.

He also reaffirmed the AU's commitment, noting that 2026 will be the AU's Year of Water, and invited participants to upcoming continental summits, including the Africa Climate Summit (Ethiopia, 2025) and the Africa Biodiversity Summit (Botswana, 2025).

Commissioner Vilakati thanked partners and investors for believing in Africa's potential, and called on African nations to rely more on internal resources and self-determination amid shifting geopolitics. He emphasised that the pledges made were not symbolic but real, with mechanisms in place to ensure follow-through.

He concluded by declaring that the Summit marks the beginning of a coordinated journey towards a water-secure, climate-resilient, and inclusive Africa, and officially closed the Summit.

Adoption of the final declaration

The convenors of the Summit, African Union, South Africa, AUDA-NEPAD, and AIP High-Level Panel invited the head of the AIP Secretariat, Mr Alex Simalabwi, CEO of Global Water Partnership to present the final Summit Declaration that was adopted by the delegates (see Annex 2).

CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

The Cape Town 2025 Summit was a landmark in Africa's development journey – a political and financial watershed. It mobilised billions in potential investment, launched a Global Outlook Council on Water Investments and Global Water Investment Platform (GIP), secured a powerful declaration, honoured visionary leadership, and placed youth at the centre of Africa's water investment future.

The message from Cape Town was clear: Africa's water future is no longer a distant aspiration. It is being funded, tracked, and globally championed.

Delegates and leaders:

- commended South Africa's G20 Presidency for inaugurating the Global Outlook Council on Water Investments and Global Water Investment Platform (GIP);
- requested inclusion of the Cape Town Declaration as an outcome of South Africa's G20 Presidency;
- resolved that the AU-AIP Africa Water Investment Summit will be convened every four years, rotating across AU regions and coordinated by the AUC; and
- called for water to be recognised as a core investment priority in the reform of multilateral financing.



ANNEX 1: SUMMARY OF ATTENDANCE AS PER REGISTRATION AND CONFIRMATIONS

| CATEGORY | THE SUMMIT IN NUMBERS | STATUS |
|--------------------|----------------------------|---|
| Heads of State | 4 + 1 Former Head of State | Confirmed |
| Ministers | 38 | Confirmed |
| Exhibitors | 39 | Confirmed and registered – the Association of Water and Sanitation Institutions of South Africa and individual companies |
| Delegates | 1,326 1,690 | Registered Participated |
| Investors | 194 | Registered |
| Media | 74 | Confirmed (53 domestic, 14 internationals, 7 official media) |
| Organising team | 174 | Confirmed |
| Steering Committee | 34 | Confirmed |
| TOTAL | 1,883 | |

HEADS OF STATE

1. H.E. President Cyril Ramaphosa (RSA)
2. H.M. King Mswati III of Eswatini
3. H.E. Duma Boko, President of Botswana
4. H.E. Jibril Abdirashid Haji Abdi, Deputy Prime Minister of Somalia
5. H.E. Jakaya Kikwete, former president of Tanzania and Alternate Co-Chair of the AU-AIP International High-Level Panel on Water Investments for Africa

REPRESENTATIVES OF HEADS OF STATE

1. H.E. Paul Kagame, President of Rwanda – represented by Dr Jimmy Gasore, Minister of Infrastructure
2. H.E. Abdulla Balalaa, Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs for Energy and Sustainability, UAE
3. H.E. Dr Abdulaziz Alshaibani, Deputy Minister for Water, Ministry of Environment, Water and Agriculture, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

4. H.E. Mia Mottley, Prime Minister of Barbados – represented by Hon. William F. Duguid, Minister of Planning and Development, Prime Minister’s Office – Senior Minister of Infrastructural Projects and Planning
5. H.E. Hassan Sheikh Mohamud, President of the Federal Republic of Somalia – represented by H.E. Jibril Abdirashid Haji Abdi, Deputy Prime Minister
6. President Brahim Ghali of the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic – represented by H.E. Mohamed Yeslem Beisat

EMINENT PERSONS

1. H.E. Moses Vilakati, Commissioner for Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy and Sustainable Environment, AUC
2. H.E. Nardos Bekele-Thomas, CEO of AUDA-NEPAD
3. H.E. Mahmoud Ali Youssouf, Chairperson of the AUC
4. Dr Diego Rodriguez, Lead Water Economist for eastern and southern Africa – World Bank
5. Mr Mtchera Johannes, Director of Water and Sanitation, AfDB
6. Mr Chuene Ramphele, Group Executive: Infrastructure, DBSA
7. Prof. Francesco Corvaro, Meike Special Envoy for Water, NL, Italy

MINISTERS

| NAME | TITLE | COUNTRY | DESIGNATION |
|------------------------------------|---|---------------|---------------------|
| Hon. Mr Taha Derbal | Ministre de l’hydraulique | Algeria | Honourable Minister |
| Hon. Kingnidé Paulin Akponna | Ministère de l’Energie, de l’Eau et des Mines | Benin | Honourable Minister |
| Hon. Onneetse Ramogapi | Ministry of Water and Human Settlement | Botswana | Honourable Minister |
| Hon. Laurent Tchagba | Ministre des Eaux et Forêts | Côte d’Ivoire | Honourable Minister |
| Hon. Prof. Dr Hani Sewilam | Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation | Egypt | Honourable Minister |
| H.R.H. Prince Lonkhokhela Dlamini | Ministry of Natural Resources and Energy | Eswatini | His Royal Highness |
| Hon. Dr Eng. Habtamu Itefa Geleta | Ministry of Water and Energy | Ethiopia | Honourable Minister |
| Hon. Kenneth Gilbert Adjei | Ministry of Works, Housing and Water Resources | Ghana | Honourable Minister |
| Hon. Eng. Eric Murithi Mugaa | Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Water, Sanitation and Irrigation | Kenya | Honourable Minister |
| Hon. Mohlomi Moleko | Minister of Natural Resources | Lesotho | Honourable Minister |
| Hon. Jocelia Taplah | Deputy Minister, Rural Development and Community Services | Liberia | Honourable Minister |
| Hon. Abdasalam Naser Gad Abdalmola | Deputy Minister of Water Resources | Libya | Honourable Minister |

| NAME | TITLE | COUNTRY | DESIGNATION |
|--|--|---|--|
| Hon. Abida Sidik Mia, M.P. | Minister of Water and Sanitation | Malawi | Honourable Minister |
| Hon. Fernando Rafael or Dr. Agostinho Chuquela Faduco Vilanculos | Ministry of Public Works, Housing and Water Resources or Water Resource Management and Water Supply and Sanitation | Mozambique | Honourable Minister |
| Hon Inge I. Zaamwani | Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Land Reform | Namibia | Honourable Minister |
| Hon. Eng. Prof. Joseph Terlumun Utsev | Minister of Water Resources and Sanitation | Nigeria | Honourable Minister |
| H.E. Mohamed Yeslem Beisat | Minister of Foreign Affairs and African Issues | Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (Western Sahara) | Honourable Minister |
| Hon. Adda Brahim Bachir | Minister of Water and Environment, Sahrawi Government | Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (Western Sahara) | Honourable Minister |
| Dr Jimmy Gasore | Minister of Infrastructure | Republic of Rwanda | Your Excellency (representing the President) |
| H.E. Dr Sao-Kpato Hannah Max-Kyne | Minister of Water Resources and Sanitation | Sierra Leone | Honourable Minister |
| H.E. Abdullahi Bidhaan | Minister of Energy and Water Resources for the Federal Government of Somalia, Mogadishu, Somalia | Somalia | Honourable Minister |
| Hon. Achier Manyuat John | Undersecretary, Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation | South Sudan | |
| Hon. Mr Ezzeddine Ben Cheikh | Ministre de l'Agriculture, des Ressources Hydrauliques et de la Pêche | Tunisia | Honourable Minister |
| Hon. Sam Cheptoris | Ministry of Water and Environment | Uganda | Honourable Minister |
| Hon. Eng Collins Nzovu, MP | Minister of Water Development and Sanitation | Zambia | Honourable Minister |
| Hon. Anxious Jongwe Masuka | Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries, Water, Climate and Rural Development | Zimbabwe | Honourable Minister |
| Hon Mawunyo Mila Aziablé | Minister of Water and Sanitation | Togo | Honourable Minister |
| Hon. Abdulrahman bin Abdulmohsen AlFadley | Minister of Environment, Water and Agriculture | Saudi Arabia | Honourable Minister |
| H.E. Abdulla Balalaa | Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs for Energy | UAE | Honourable Minister |
| Hon. Dr William Duguid, M.P. | Senior Minister | Barbados | Honourable Minister (representing the President) |

ANNEX 2: THE CAPE TOWN DECLARATION ON AFRICA WATER INVESTMENTS IN THE CONTEXT OF G20

PREAMBLE

We, the African Heads of State and Government, in the presence of other Global Leaders, gathered in Cape Town from 13 to 15 August, 2025 for the inaugural Africa Water Investment Summit, convened under the auspices of the African Union, the High-Level Panel on Water Investment for Africa and the Republic of South Africa's G20 Presidency.

Also in attendance were the Ministers and Deputy Ministers, financial institutions, investors, development partners, civil society, technical experts, philanthropic institutions Intergovernmental Organizations, Regional Economic Communities, United Nations Agencies, Private Sector, Youth, Women and Academia.

RECALLING the commitment of the African Union Heads of State and Government in July 2008, in terms of the Sharm El Sheik Declaration on Water and Sanitation (Assembly/AU/Decl.1(xii), which seeks to accelerate the achievement of water and sanitation goals in Africa.

ALSO RECALLING the Africa Water Vision 2025, which envisions "An Africa where there is equitable and sustainable use and management of water resources for poverty alleviation, socioeconomic development, regional cooperation and the environment".

ACKNOWLEDGING that inadequate investments in water have affected the gains made across all the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the critical role that water plays in climate change adaptation and mitigation and the goals of Agenda 2063.

RECOGNISING that the Continental Africa Water Investment Programme (AIP) is the brainchild of the United Nations-World Bank High Level Panel on Water (HLPW). The HLPW was established by United Nations General Secretary Ban Ki-Moon and President of the World Bank Jim Yong Kim, comprised of eleven sitting Presidents and Prime Ministers.

RECOGNISING the need to build climate resilience through water investments in Africa in response to the projected severe and more frequent impacts of climate change as expounded in the African Union Climate Change and

Resilient Development Strategy and Action Plan (2022-2032).

RECALLING the approval of the Continental Africa Water Investment Program (AIP) as part of the Program for Infrastructure Development in Africa-Priority Action Plan 2 (PIDA- PAP 2) by the African Heads of State and Government during the 34th Ordinary Session of the African Union Assembly which took place in February 2021 (EX.CL/1108(XXXVIII)).

RECALLING the launch of the High-Level Panel on Water Investment for Africa at the 9th World Water Forum in Dakar on 25th March 2022 comprising of the founding co-chairs; the Republic of Senegal, Republic of Namibia; Kingdom of the Netherlands, and the fourth President of the United Republic of Tanzania.

NOTING that during the UN 2023 Water Conference in New York, the African Union and International High-Level Panel released the High-Level Panel Report, with pathways for countries to mobilise at least US\$30 billion annually by 2030 to close the water investment gap in Africa, as part of the UN Water Action Agenda.

NOTING that in December 2023 during COP 28 in Dubai, UAE, the African Union Commission and AIP International High-Level Panel launched the Africa Water Investment Action Plan, outlining how countries can mobilise the additional US\$30 billion per year required to ensure water security and sustainable sanitation on the continent.

APPRECIATING the AU Resolution EX.CL/Dec.2(XLIV) Rev.1/42: APPROVES the proposal to adopt "Assuring Sustainable Water Availability and Safe Sanitation Systems to Achieve the Goals of Agenda 2063" as the African Union Theme of the year 2026.

RECOGNISING the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) for initiating the first G20 Water Dialogues under the KSA G20 Presidency in 2020 that considered water as key for socioeconomic development, supported by G20 member States.

RECOGNISING that the Summit is taking place at a historic time, marking the first-ever G20 Presidency hosted on the African soil and the progressive admission of the African Union into the G20 membership.

REAFFIRMING that water and sanitation are not only foundational to peace, economic growth and development, human dignity and public health but are also essential to climate resilience, food security, economic transformation, and achievement of progress in implementing the SDGs.

APPRECIATING the opportunity presented through the G20 Presidency of South Africa to elevate Africa's water investments, minding the gap in water investments and leveraging on the African Union's membership to the G20 and the opportunity to highlight the outcomes of the Summit as address in the declaration.

WELCOME the preliminary potential financial outcomes identified in the pipelines present at the Summit, estimated conservatively at 10 to 12 billion dollars per year worth of investments from some Development Banks, Investors, bilateral and governments, across the Continent.

NOTE that the above excludes anticipated pledges and investments that will be consolidated. Further Investors in the matchmaking sessions committed to submit their initial pledges to the online portal, which will increase the total committed investments, secured by this Summit.

HEREBY COMMIT TO:

1. Create an enabling environment for enhancing investment for water and sanitation, aligned with national development plans, SDG 6, and climate resilience priorities.
2. Scale up domestic public and private finance for water investments, including through national budgets, and innovative financing mechanisms.
3. Request the African Union Commission to continue providing leadership in the implementation of the Africa Water Investment Program (AIP), track progress using the AIP Water Investment Scorecard, and supporting Member States and Regional Economic Communities to develop national and regional climate resilient water investment programs.
4. Further request African Union Commission to support Member States and Regional Economic Communities in developing project pipelines to mobilise resources, including climate finance.
5. Call for the reform of the multilateral financial institutions, taking into consideration the urgent need for accelerated investment in the water and sanitation sector, priority given to Africa to bridge the water investment gap.
6. Deploy de-risking tools where they add real value—

particularly in underserved rural and peri-urban areas, fragile and conflict-affected states, and for nature-based solutions.

7. Raise the profile of water to drive sustainable economic growth and improve people's health, nutrition and prosperity across the continent; recognising that water investments can reduce the impacts of climate change and build resilience.
8. Call on governments and their development partners to work together to establish the conditions needed to attract and secure significant investments, including public and private finance, in increasing water security and access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene.
9. Mobilise concessional and catalytic capital to enable investments where private capital alone cannot flow.
10. Prioritise public benefit and local ownership, particularly in areas where water services remain a critical human right and development enabler.
11. Call upon the (inter)national and regional financial institutions in Africa to prioritise financing water and sanitation investment pipelines, including innovative financing mechanisms.

Roadmap and accountability

12. Commend South Africa G20 Presidency for the inauguration of the Global Outlook Council on Water Investments and its Global Water Investment Platform as a Legacy Initiative advocating for water investments at the highest levels of global diplomacy.
13. Request the inclusion of this Declaration as part of the outcomes of South Africa's G20 Presidency, track and report progress regularly in implementation of Legacy Initiative.
14. Call on G20 leaders to support the endorsement of water as a core investment priority in the reimagining of multilateral finance.
15. Call upon the co-hosts UAE and Senegal of the 2026 UN Water Conference, to anchor the Declaration into the preparatory process.
16. Resolve to convene African Water Investment Summits every 4 years on a regional rotational basis, under the coordination role of the African Union Commission.
17. Request the Republic of South Africa, in their capacity as the G20 Presidency, to present this Declaration to the 39th Ordinary Session of the African Union Assembly of Heads of State and Government in February 2026 for endorsement.

Acknowledgment of Convenors and Partners

We commend the leadership of the African Union Commission and the Government of the Republic of South Africa as Convenors of the Summit, acknowledge the contribution of AUDA-NEPAD, the AIP High Level Panel,

and the Global Water Partnership as host of the AU-AIP Summit Secretariat, and appreciate the support of our partners.

Adopted this 15th day of August 2025 in Cape Town, South Africa.



Ms Nchedi Moripe, Chief Director of Global Cooperation, DWS with Hon. William F. Duguid, Senior Minister of Infrastructure, Prime Minister's Office, Barbados



ANNEX 3: ADDRESS BY PRESIDENT CYRIL RAMAPHOSA AT THE AU-AIP AFRICA WATER INVESTMENT SUMMIT AND LAUNCH OF THE G20 PRESIDENTIAL LEGACY INITIATIVE ON WATER INVESTMENT, CAPE TOWN INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION CENTRE

Your Excellencies, Heads of State and Government,

Honourable Ministers,

Distinguished Champions,

Development Partners,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is an honour to welcome you to Cape Town for the official opening of the Africa Water Investment Summit.

This Summit is a landmark moment not only for Africa, but for the global movement for access to safe water for all.

We gather here as decision-makers, investors, financiers and champions at a time when the world faces a deepening water crisis.

Yet, this is also at a moment of immense opportunity.

If we rise together, water can become not just a means of survival but a driver of economic transformation, innovation and peace.

This Summit is rooted in a journey that began nearly a decade ago.

In 2016, the High-Level Panel on Water was launched by the then UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon and World Bank President, Jim Yong Kim.

At this event nine years ago, 11 Heads of State gathered to rethink how the world approaches water.

Following their recommendations, the African Union established the Africa Water Investment Programme and the International High-Level Panel on Water Investments for Africa.

The panel set us the task to mobilise at least USD 30 billion a year by 2030 to close Africa's water investment gap.

South Africa is proud to be a founding member of this

Panel and to answer the call to host this Africa Water Investment Summit in the context of our G20 Presidency.

We are gathered here at this Summit with four clear goals.

Firstly, to endorse a Summit Declaration that commits us to scale up investments, improve governance and increase accountability in the water sector.

Secondly, to showcase a pipeline of 80 priority water investment projects from 38 countries.

Thirdly, to facilitate matchmaking between governments, financiers and partners.

And fourthly, to position water at the highest levels of the global political and financial agenda from G20 and COP30 to the UN 2026 Water Conference and beyond.

But today, we are going even further.

We are witnessing the launch of the Global Outlook Council on Water Investments and Global Water Investment Platform (GIP), which is a G20 Presidential Legacy Initiative.

We are bringing Africa and international partners together and calling on investors to heed the call to invest in water.

The launch of the Global Outlook Council on Water Investments will see the Africa Water Investment Programme scaled up into a Global Water Investment Platform.

I would like to thank the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for initiating the first G20 Water Dialogue under its G20 Presidency in 2020, which considered water as a key ingredient for socioeconomic development, poverty alleviation, human health and well-being.

This process was sustained by the subsequent G20 Presidencies of Italy in 2021, Indonesia in 2022, India in 2023 and Brazil in 2024.

And now, South Africa as the current G20 Presidency, in partnership with the African Union and the Africa

Investments Panel, recognises it as the “AU-AIP Water Investment Summit”.

The Global Outlook Council and the Global Water Investment Platform (GIP) will serve as the world’s premier high-level political and investment platform on water.

It will track progress, unlock finance, report annually and align efforts across the G20, UN, MDBs and the private sector.

It will mobilise the leadership, capital and innovation required to transform water from a crisis sector into an opportunity sector.

Last week, we were able to demonstrate the capacity and appetite of Africa on mega project investments when I launched the second phase of the Zuikerbosch Water Purification Plant in the province of Gauteng.

This plant is part of a development that will supply an extra 600 million litres of water a day to address the growing water demand across four South African provinces.

This flagship project is a demonstration of our government’s commitment to infrastructure investment, economic upliftment and ensuring sustainable water supply for future generations.

We are looking forward to the alignment of the Global Outlook Council on Water Investments and Global Investment Panel (GIP) initiative with the investment theme of the 2026 UN Water Conference: “Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.”

I am pleased to acknowledge the invited leaders who will work with the South African G20 Presidency as co-chair in the leadership of this Council. These are:

- **President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan** of the UAE
- **Prime Minister Mia Mottley** of Barbados
- **Mr Bill Gates**, Co-Chair of the Gates Foundation.

These distinguished leaders will be assisted by Alternate Co-Chairs as facilitators for effective broad engagement of the Council members represented by my dear brother and sister:

- **President Jakaya Kikwete**, former president of Tanzania
- **Her Excellency Amina J. Mohammed**, UN Deputy Secretary-General.

It is a great honour to inaugurate the following invited leaders as Council Members:

- **President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva** of Brazil
- **President Claudia Sheinbaum** of Mexico

- **Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman** of Saudi Arabia
- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** of India
- **Prime Minister Anthony Albanese** of Australia
- **Prime Minister Keir Starmer** of the UK
- **Chancellor Friedrich Merz** of Germany
- **Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni** of Italy
- **President Ursula von der Leyen** of European Commission
- **President João Lourenço** of Angola and African Union Chair
- **President Bassirou Diomaye Faye** of Senegal, who is co-host of the UN 2026 Water Conference.

The Council will be supported by a group of global leaders who will serve as Council Champions.

I wish to applaud these leaders, who have stepped forward to confront and overcome a challenge faced by billions of people across the world.

The Council will guide the transition from fragmented water investments to a coherent, coordinated and capitalised global effort through the Global Water Investment Platform.

Today, we say clearly: Water investment must no longer be an afterthought at climate and finance discussions.

It must be at the centre of discussions. It must be financed, tracked and championed.

Let us leave this Summit with deals, pipelines, partnerships and a permanent global mechanism to sustain the momentum.

The matchmaking sessions planned for this Summit should create long-lasting partnerships and increased investments in water.

Let us build a world where every drop counts and every community thrives.

Let us build a world where water is recognised as a human right and not weaponised against women, children and communities.

It is my honour and pleasure to officially open the Africa Water Investment Summit and launch the Global Outlook Council on Water Investments and Global Water Investment Platform (GIP).

In the words of the Founding President of the democratic South Africa, Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela: “It is now in our hands.”

Let the work begin. Let us leave no one behind.

I thank you.



ANNEX 4: MATCHMAKING SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

THIS SECTION SHARES HIGHLIGHTS OF THE OUTCOMES OF THE MATCHMAKING SESSION FOR 25 SELECTED PROJECTS.

1. Noordoewer/Vioolsdrift Dam Development Project (RSA/Namibia)

Financiers Engaged: AfDB, DBSA, Industrial Development Corporation (IDC), development partners.

Budget: USD 231 million.

Way Forward: Strong interest shown; AfDB committed to reviewing and DBSA/IDC requested further engagement with project preparation. To be considered for phased packaging and blended financing.

2. Angololo Dam (Kenya/Uganda)

Financiers Engaged: AfDB (African Water Facility), Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, Global Water Intelligence, WaterAid.

Budget: USD 132 million.

Way Forward: AfDB queried co-funding, Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank requested additional reports to review scope, Global Water Intelligence explored PPP structuring, and WaterAid advised balancing sanitation with water supply.

3. Algoa Water Supply System: Coerney Dam

Financiers Engaged: SADC Water Fund, OVRAP Engineering Firm.

Budget: USD 40 million (USD 16 million already raised).

Way Forward: SADC Water Fund committed to follow-up after the initial matchmaking session discussions.

4. Congo River Water Transfer to Zambezi (Regional/SADC)

Financiers Engaged: Posh Holdings (with Finnish support), IDC.

Budget: USD 20 million (feasibility).

Way Forward: Posh Holdings and Finnish partner requested clarification on supply chain and return on investment; IDC requested a virtual follow-up meeting and expressed willingness to fund pre-feasibility studies.

5. Floating PV Solar Generating Facilities – Katse and Mohale (Lesotho)

Financiers Engaged: AfDB, IDC.

Budget: USD 305 million.

Way Forward: AfDB indicated interest with follow-up meeting required; IDC committed but will await follow-up for structuring and feasibility finalisation.

6. Chirundu Water Supply and Basic Sanitation Project – Phase II

Financier Engaged: IDC.

Budget: USD 8.3 million.

Way Forward: IDC expressed interest and committed to a follow-up meeting to explore potential investment opportunities.

7. Foxwood Dam (RSA)

Financiers Engaged: IDC, DBSA, AfDB.

Budget: USD 140 million.

Way Forward: IDC expressed strong interest; AfDB indicated readiness to explore collaboration opportunities. Follow-up meetings planned.

8. Inhambane Water Supply Project (Mozambique)

Financiers Engaged: Injine Engineering, financiers (AfDB, others).

Budget: €24 million.

Way Forward: Commitment to explore financing modalities. Project owner to submit detailed plan; discussions scheduled in Mozambique.

9. Non-sewered Sanitation Programme (Water Efficient Sanitation Solutions Programme, RSA)

Financier Engaged: Gates Foundation.

Budget: USD 50 million.

Way Forward: Gates Foundation committed to establishment funding; discussions ongoing with other partners on blended models (grants, bonds, sanitation fund).

10. Enhancing Energy Efficiency in Water Utilities (Mampong Project, Ghana)

Financiers Engaged: GIZ, AfDB, German Development Cooperation, IFC.

Budget: USD 3.5 million (request USD 3.15 million plus USD 150,000 counterpart from Ghana Water).

Way Forward: Partners engaged to support audits, technology upgrades, and knowledge exchange; interest shown in replication potential and renewable energy integration.

11. Lake Victoria-Mediterranean Sea Navigational Line (VICMED Project, Egypt/Regional)

Financiers Engaged: AfDB (USD 2 million for Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment – SESA), Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (conditional interest), Arab Consulting Firm (advisory due diligence).

Budget: USD 9.7 million gap (AfDB has already contributed USD 2 million).

Way Forward: Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank interest conditional on implementation participation and Member State benefits; Arab Consulting Firm engaged in technical/financial due diligence discussions.

12. Premium Sustainable Aquaculture and Trout Farming Project – Lesotho

Financier Engaged: Square Gate

Budget: USD 42 million.

Way Forward: Square Gate requested detailed business case information (market details, technical assistance, return on investment, exit strategy). Investment readiness discussions expected.

13. Strategic Actions for Climate-resilient Water Resources Management in the Orange-Senqu River Basin

Financier Engaged: Square Gate

Budget: USD 23 million capital plus USD 4 million operational.

Way Forward: Square Gate expressed interest in a potential PPP partnership; requested return on investment details, business case, and further discussion with the Orange-Senqu River Commission. Investment readiness required.

14. Vaal Gamagara Phase 2 Bulk Water Supply (RSA)

Financiers Engaged: AfDB, Standard Bank, ABSA, Nedbank, Agence Française de Développement (AFD), Sufficient Grace Trading.

Way Forward: Investors showed strong interest given the project's economic component, making it viable for blended financing solutions. Identified for follow-up discussions.

15. Western Highveld Bulk Water Supply (RSA)

Financiers Engaged: AfDB, Standard Bank, ABSA, Nedbank, AFD, Sufficient Grace Trading.

Way Forward: Less intriguing for financiers because of its strong social nature. Still included for follow-ups but not a priority for immediate investment.

16. Musina to Beitbridge Bulk Water Supply (RSA/Zimbabwe)

Financiers Engaged: AfDB, Standard Bank, ABSA, Nedbank, AFD, Sufficient Grace Trading.

Way Forward: At inception stage; investors are targeting implementation-ready projects, hence limited current interest.

17. Greater Bulwer (Stephen Dlamini) Bulk Water Supply (RSA)

Financiers Engaged: AfDB, Standard Bank, ABSA, Nedbank, AFD, Sufficient Grace Trading.

Way Forward: Presented to investors, follow-up discussions planned as part of broader programme-level engagement.

18. uMzimkhulu River Abstraction and Cwabeni Bulk Water Supply (RSA)

Financiers Engaged: AfDB, Standard Bank, ABSA, Nedbank, AFD, Sufficient Grace Trading.

Way Forward: Strong investor interest because of noticeable economic component, considered viable for blended financing solutions. AFD expressed interest and committed to follow-up meetings to explore investment opportunities.

19. Mandlakazi Regional Bulk Water Supply (RSA)

Financiers Engaged: AfDB, Standard Bank, ABSA, Nedbank, AFD, Sufficient Grace Trading.

Way Forward: Less intriguing for financiers because of the project's social nature. Included in follow-ups but not a priority for immediate investment.

20. AfDB 12-Project Pipeline

Financiers Engaged: Asia Infrastructure Investment Bank, WaterAid UK, Impact Fund Denmark (three investors committed).

Budget: Approximately USD 2.1 billion (about USD 1.1–1.2 billion committed, ~60% of ask).

Way Forward: Investors sought clarity on project readiness, geographical focus, and specific investment needs. Commitment secured for a significant share of the pipeline financing.

21. PACWA Project – Egypt

Financiers Engaged: 13 partners, including Asia Infrastructure Investment Bank, WaterAid UK, Impact Fund Denmark.

Budget: USD 8 million.

Way Forward: Three financiers committed financing support; further discussions with partners to structure engagement.

22. Expansion and Improvement of Water Supply and Sewerage Services – Lilongwe, Malawi

Financier Engaged: World Bank.

Budget: USD 38 million.

Way Forward: World Bank committed to financing sustainability plan beyond O&M.

23. Salima-Lilongwe Water Supply Project (Malawi)

Financiers Engaged: JG Afrika, Metito.

Budget: USD 10 million already secured; larger pipeline under structuring.

Way Forward: JG Afrika showed strong interest; project team in discussions with banks for larger investment; off-take agreements signed to strengthen bankability.

24. Water Reuse Programme – South Africa

Financier Engaged: GCF.

Budget: USD 1.472 billion (programme-wide).

Way Forward: Secured GCF funding to support scaled preparation and implementation of advanced wastewater reuse projects.

25. Construction of Five New Faecal Sludge Treatment Plants – Burkina Faso

Financiers Engaged: None (no investors or financial institutions present).

Budget: USD 134 million.

Way Forward: No financial commitments were made. Strategic/technical interest was expressed by the Economic Community of West African States (as a potential strategic partner for advocacy and positioning), Ghana Water Limited (experience-sharing), and other participants.



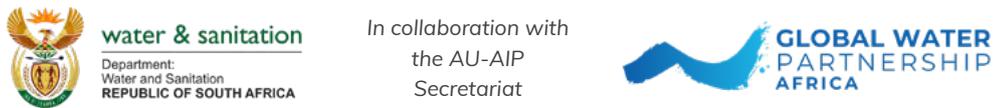


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