

Programme aims to boost municipal service delivery

A capacity building programme to strengthen institutional capacity in the areas of personnel skills and administrative systems has been launched at eleven municipalities across five provinces in South Africa.



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The programme, which represents an investment of R120m for the first three years, is an initiative by Anglo American, in partnership with the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA) and the Investment Climate Facility for Africa (ICF).

The programme's key deliverables are to develop and implement plans and procedures to improve municipal billing systems and controls, and reduce electricity and water distribution losses at pilot municipal sites. The programme will also review municipal infrastructure plans, asset management and co-ordination of the sector policies that guide provision of municipal services and provide technical support to address any shortfalls in the infrastructure necessary for basic service delivery. The programme will also focus on attracting inward investment into the eleven municipalities.

Severe skills gaps

"Institutional incapacity and severe skills gaps continue to hinder the prospects of many municipalities across the country," said Khanyisile Kweyama, executive director for Anglo American in South Africa. "As a result, these municipalities struggle to generate enough revenue to maintain basic service delivery to their local communities. When municipal operations don't live up to community expectations, service delivery protests frequently occur, weakening municipal operations and impacting businesses which operate in these areas.

"Although provision of municipal services is constitutionally the responsibility of the local authority, Anglo American's efforts to building capacity in communities in and around our mining operations often extends to working in partnership with local authorities where necessary," Kweyama said.

The municipalities being supported are King Sabata Dalindyebo in the Eastern Cape; Ga-Sekgonyana, Gamagara, Joe Morolong and Tsantsabane local municipalities in the Northern Cape; Thabazimbi, Greater Tubatse and Mogalakwena local municipalities in Limpopo; Emalahleni local municipality in Mpumalanga; and the Moses Kotane and Rustenburg local municipalities in North West.

Stabilising business climate

"ICF is pleased to be part of this important initiative that will help local municipalities in South Africa improve service delivery in their areas, and thereby improve the business environment of these municipalities," William Asiko, CEO at ICF commented. "When services such as water, electricity, road maintenance, sanitation and waste management are provided in an efficient and reliable manner, businesses are attracted to invest, providing jobs and contributing to the local economy.

"As partners, we anticipate that the stabilisation of the business climate at municipal level will also provide a foundation for entrepreneurship and new businesses, which could help achieve higher levels of local employment and local procurement."

DBSA CEO Patrick Dlamini added: "The ability of many municipalities to render services to their communities, including access to financial resources for infrastructure programmes, is under increasing pressure. Support to municipalities as key delivery agents for social services remains an important focus area for DBSA."

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