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PPP Event: Key Insights and Summary

Fostering public and private sector collaboration on water and sanitation infrastructure to accelerate South Africa's economic growth



July 2025



A summary of salient points from the speaker presentations and panel discussion. Deloitte.

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Opening remarks



GREG RAMMEGO Government & Public Services Industry Leader, Deloitte Africa

eloitte is steadfast in its commitment to advancing South Africa's economy and fully supports the government's ambitious goal of achieving over 3% growth in the medium term. This growth can only be realised through a robust and effective partnership between the public and private sectors. Infrastructure forms the backbone of our economy, and without well-maintained and sufficient infrastructure, the government will struggle to deliver essential services to its citizens. Access to safe and clean drinking water and sanitation is a fundamental human right that we must uphold. It is crucial for all stakeholders to unite and take action to safeguard this right, especially in a water-scarce nation like ours.

The 2022 Green Drop report reveals that 88% of wastewater treatment plants are in critical condition, underscoring a pressing need for comprehensive improvements across all aspects of the wastewater sector. Additionally, the 2022 South African Institution of Civil Engineering Infrastructure Report Card public infrastructure scores declined from C to D, particularly in smaller towns. This D rating suggests that the infrastructure is struggling to meet normal demand.

The private sector plays a significant role in both generating essential financing for new infrastructure projects and enhancing the efficiency of water systems. These operational improvements can often serve as a necessary foundation for attracting private investment. It's promising to observe the government's commitment to fostering public-private partnerships (PPP) aimed at advancing infrastructure development and addressing current challenges. The recent amendment to the National Treasury Regulation 16 (NTR16), which encourages private sector involvement, is certainly a positive development that aligns with these goals.

The government's dedication to providing a secure and reliable water supply is noteworthy, as highlighted by the President in the State of the Nation Address 2025. It is commendable to see such initiatives being prioritised, as they play a crucial role in enhancing the quality of life for citizens. These efforts not only address immediate needs but also contribute to long-term sustainability.

Deloitte Africa is actively engaged in advancing Africa's infrastructure development through strategic initiatives such as the B20, particularly considering South Africa's G20 Presidency. We are focused on leveraging this platform to enhance infrastructure investment across the continent. As the Knowledge Partner for the Finance and Infrastructure task force, we are committed to developing critical policy recommendations for G20 consideration, with the goal of accelerating the global development of sustainable infrastructure.

Government's thinking on the private sector's participation in infrastructure



DORCAS KAYO Director: Infrastructure Finance, National Treasury

Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) play a crucial role in the development and management of infrastructure projects within South Africa, governed by a robust legislative framework.

The key sets of legislation governing PPPs for national and provincial governments in South Africa are National Treasury Regulation 16, the National Treasury PPP Manual, and Standardised PPP Provisions. Under NTR16, a PPP is assessed based on three key principles: value for money, affordability, and appropriate risk transfer. When conducting these PPP tests, the Treasury needs to review the feasibility study, procurement documents, and PPP agreement management.

The amendments to NTR16 were officially gazetted on 7 February 2025 and will take effect on 1 June 2025. It's essential to note that these regulations apply specifically to projects that have not yet received approval from the Treasury. For projects already in the pipeline, preparations for the Treasury's approval should be underway. These regulations do not affect existing projects but are intended for new initiatives moving forward. In the context of a PPP, the agreement typically includes clauses outlining the obligations of the government. It is specified that if the government defaults on its contractual obligations, there are financial provisions in place to address this. This clarity helps to ensure accountability and align expectations for all stakeholders involved.

An additional aspect that requires Treasury's attention is the management of fiscal risks, conditions, and liabilities. This area presents a significant concern, as it is typically only the transaction advisors who possess a comprehensive understanding of these elements within PPP contracts when they engage with the National Treasury. We recognise that various stakeholders, including national, provincial, and municipal fiscal authorities, may not fully grasp the implications of these contractual obligations. To address this gap, we have implemented a disclosure regime designed to effectively identify, manage, and report fiscal commitments and contingent liabilities.

When examining the issue of liability in the context of a PPP contract, whether it pertains to the private sector or government involvement, it is essential to note that the government often incurs greater costs due to retaining ownership of the asset. In addressing the challenges, we aim to rectify, one significant concern is the need for simplification within the procurement process.

The Treasury is seeking to reduce red tape and establish a clear framework

for granting exemptions for low-value projects, currently defined at a threshold of R2 billion. Their objective is to enhance procedural efficiencies that will facilitate the acceleration of project development. Furthermore, they aim to strengthen accountability within the PPP sector, recognising that there have been several project cancellations, including those related to prisons and healthcare facilities. To fortify accountability, they propose implementing a judicious limitation on accounting officers to prevent the abandonment of projects without justifiable cause.

The Unsolicited Bid Proposals (USPs) Framework aims to simplify the process for the private sector to pursue projects under clear rules and guidelines. This demonstrates their commitment to regulating the integration of USPs into the PPP structure. The National Treasury has regulated the introduction of USPs into the PPP framework, and one of the measures is to provide incentives for the private sector. There are two incentives offered. One incentive is that although the private company has to pay for the assessment of the USP, when it comes to procurement, the initiating company is automatically shortlisted, and it does not have to compete to be shortlisted. The second incentive is that if the initiating company does not win and its project reaches financial closure, the winning bidder will reimburse the initiating company for the investment it made in its USP.

Treasury is hoping the regulations will reduce the procedural complexity, fix the regulatory rules and to make sure to clarify the institutional relationship throughout the value chain, making it easier for the private sector to engage in various opportunities and hopefully energise the sector so that private sector players can begin to build up on more PPPs. In response to inquiries concerning credit enhancement, Treasury is in the process of establishing a credit enhancement platform. Although it is still under development, this platform aims to facilitate credit enhancements and guarantees, particularly in light of the National Treasury's restrictions on guarantee issuance. There are other pathways for Treasury to support various projects, and a budget facility for infrastructure can assist in credit enhancement. However, recognising the viability gap and the numerous PPPs that are shelved due to a viability gap, Treasury has now allowed PPPs to cut into the budget facility for infrastructure to close the funding gap.

Leading practices in structuring and implementation of private sector participation in water & sanitation



ANDRE KRUGER CEO, PPP Training Online

he public sector faces challenges in adopting new technologies and systems for water management. There is an overemphasis on social aspects of water without charging cost-reflective tariffs yet globally water is treated as an economic good to enable sustainably meeting the social aspect. The World Bank indicates that water insecurity can negatively impact GDP by up to 6%. An understanding of the impact of water insecurity on South Africa's GDP could perhaps be an incentive for all stakeholders to prioritise and focus on water security.

Globally, several leading practices have been adopted including long term Operation and Maintenance arrangements such as leases, affermage or concessions; global metering; and export credit support.

Let's embrace the power of PPPs to innovate a different approach, just like the banking industry transitioned seamlessly into electronic services, we can leap forward with PPPs where applicable including in wastewater treatment facilities. Instead of merely managing these plants, everyone can enhance their strategies by incorporating advanced technologies beyond traditional metering platforms. Imagine harnessing predictive asset analytics to optimise operations. Consider roads and bridges equipped with high-tech systems that provide real-time insights into their performance and condition, enabling proactive maintenance and enhanced safety. This progressive asset management approach not only contributes to the longevity of the infrastructure but also enhances efficiency. It's exciting to note that companies leveraging advanced analytic solutions tend to outperform their competitors by around 40%. This illustrates the incredible potential that lies in adopting innovative measures. By investing in modern metering systems and analytics, everyone can drive significant improvements in their services while ensuring a sustainable future.



Government's thinking on private sector participation in water infrastructure



JOHANN LUBBE Head: Water Partnerships Office, Development Bank of Southern Africa

he Department of Water and Sanitation, in collaboration with the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA) and South African Local Government Association (SALGA), has taken a significant step by establishing the Water Partnerships Office (WPO). This initiative aims to create meaningful opportunities for the private sector to collaborate with national and provincial government and municipalities to enhance water service delivery. Addressing the challenge of developing bankable projects is crucial for success in this endeavour. Their mandate focuses on fostering these opportunities, encouraging private sector involvement in supporting municipalities effectively.

The WPO aims to create standardised programmes that foster private sector participation in municipal water and sanitation services. By developing these national programmes, they can streamline the partnership process for municipalities, making it easier, quicker, and more cost-effective, eliminating the need to 'reinvent the wheel' with each new partnership. Additionally, they will provide support to municipalities, helping them prepare bankable projects, particularly in areas where they may lack the necessary expertise for conducting feasibility studies and financial structuring. This standardised approach will not only simplify project preparation but also enable municipalities to leverage insights and lessons from

previous experiences, ultimately leading to more successful outcomes.

The WPO has secured project preparation funding to help it acquire the necessary skills to develop bankable projects ready for market implementation. While it is not a financial institution and does not directly invest in projects, its goal is to create opportunities that attract development finance institutions, commercial banks, and private sector investors to effectively finance these initiatives.

Once a project enters the implementation phase, particularly in the case of a PPP, ongoing monitoring and effective contract management become essential. However, many municipalities may not be fully equipped to handle these responsibilities. To address this challenge, the WPO offers valuable support in this area. It has developed six standardised programmes designed to facilitate this process and ensure successful project outcomes.

Six standardised programmes for partnership

Non-Revenue Water:



Water Reuse:



Wastewater Treatment:



Non-sewered Sanitation:



Seawater Desalination:



Management Contracts:



The goal is to enhance water management by minimising losses and over-consumption while improving cost recovery. It's essential to acknowledge that municipalities currently face significant challenges, with nearly 50% of their water resources being wasted, resulting in substantial revenue losses. This programme is strategically designed to help them address these issues. The WPO engages the private sector through performance-based contracts, which foster collaboration and accountability in our efforts to create a more sustainable and efficient water system.

At this stage, further treatment options for municipal wastewater are explored, allowing it to be repurposed for various applications such as potable water, industrial use, or agricultural irrigation. Water reuse projects are ideally suited for a PPP mechanism, a project finance model that the WPO will prioritise in its planning and implementation. The WPO is pleased to announce that it has secured funding from the Green Climate Fund (GCF), an international organisation dedicated to supporting developing countries in their climate adaptation and mitigation efforts. The WPO's successful acquisition of US\$235 million marks a significant milestone, as it was the largest adaptation project funded by the GCF at the time. This funding will enable the WPO to roll out impactful water reuse projects and contribute positively to the community's sustainability goals.

Assisting municipalities in upgrading, refurbishing and rehabilitating wastewater treatment facilities.

The aim is to accelerate and implement non-sewered sanitation solutions in South Africa collaboratively. The Gates Foundation is actively involved in this initiative, introducing innovative water-efficient sanitation technologies. This programme offers a valuable opportunity to scale the adoption of these solutions nationwide, fostering improved sanitation access and sustainability across the country. The model being explored is the independent sanitation providers, where private sector can provide the sanitation service instead of the municipality.

The WPO is exploring innovative models for providing essential services in coastal cities, focusing on independent water producers who specialise in converting seawater into potable water through desalination. Additionally, it is considering the possibility of engaging independent sanitation providers from the private sector to deliver sanitation services, moving beyond traditional municipal offerings. While it acknowledges the challenges associated with these approaches, the WPO remains optimistic about the potential benefits. Its seawater desalination programme aims to procure significant volumes of desalinated water from private sector partners, enhancing efficiency and service delivery for communities.

The private sector offers operational and management support for the Water and Sanitation (W&S) functions within the municipality.

To enhance the effectiveness of their initiatives, the WPO aims to establish programme guarantees for two key programmes: the non-revenue water programme and the water reuse programme. By providing these guarantees, the WPO can support Performance Based Contracts (PBC) contractors and their lenders in maximising the benefits of the non-revenue water and water reuse programme. The WPO is in discussion with the IFC on the water reuse guarantee; and in discussions with other funders regarding the non-revenue water guarantee. Overall, the goal of the WPO is to take a proactive approach in partnering with municipalities to structure these projects collaboratively. By navigating the processes and utilising the opportunities created by the Treasury, the WPO can expedite the advancement of these critical projects moving forward.

Lessons learnt and case studies in water infrastructure financing



MOJABENG MONYAMANE Coverage Head: Municipalities, Cities and Water Boards, Development Bank of South Africa

here is an incredible opportunity to invest approximately R90 billion each year in the water value chain. However, currently only about R17 billion is allocated towards it, which leaves a substantial gap to address. DBSA is actively collaborating with both local and global investors to bridge this gap. DBSA is genuinely excited about the prospect of working alongside existing legislation and policies, as well as partnering with municipalities, regardless of their current circumstances. Looking ahead to the necessary reforms, it's essential to consider key pieces of legislation, such as Section 78 of the Municipal Systems Act and Section 76 of the Water Services Act. These laws play a crucial role in DBSA's efforts.

As it stands, if a municipal manager, with the Council's support, determines they are unable to provide vital infrastructure, they can leverage Section 78 of the Municipal Systems Act. This allows them to explore alternative delivery, operational, and financing models by engaging with private sector or public sector implementing agents.

From a financing perspective, DBSA sees exciting potential in emerging markets, particularly across the African continent. While some governments may not always directly support projects, the continent continues to thrive and develop infrastructure through innovative, alternative solutions. This kind of ingenuity positions DBSA well for the future, and the bank is very optimistic about what can be accomplished together.

Case studies in water infrastructure

The eThekwini Water PPP initiative, which is officially registered with the National Treasury, embodies the classic PPP model. The municipality partners with a private entity to enhance existing infrastructure, develop new projects, and ensure efficient water supply for the community. This long-term collaboration allows the private partner to manage comprehensive water service delivery effectively. The public sector is also set to raise capital through the markets to support different users. An intriguing aspect of this project is its potential for water reuse, particularly given the involvement of a manufacturing plant. It's a promising opportunity that can significantly benefit the community and the environment.

The Local Municipalities Water Utility project represents an exciting private sector partnership model that offers a fresh approach to water management. It is not a public-private partnership. DBSA has worked closely with the National Treasury and the provincial government in Mpumalanga to navigate the regulations surrounding this venture. This ambitious project is valued at around R300 million and aims to significantly enhance local water infrastructure. The appointed acting Municipal Manager brings a wealth of expertise in the Systems Act and the Municipal Finance Management Act, ensuring that everything runs smoothly. The DBSA engaged a third-party private entity to lease and expand the existing infrastructure from 12 megalitres to a 36 megalitres per day, meeting the growing demand in the community. The appointed consultancy collaborates closely with municipalities and technical partners to devise innovative solutions for both rehabilitation and expansion. Moreover, this initiative is designed to benefit the local municipality by sharing profits, reflecting the commitment to fostering community growth.

A vital aspect of this process is the skills transfer feature, which will empower the municipality. By the end of the collaboration, the DBSA will provide comprehensive manuals and procedures to ensure a smooth transition. The goal is not just to hand over the project but to facilitate a seamless transfer of skills and staff from the municipality to the utility, fostering a bright future for everyone involved. Together, we can create lasting positive change.

The District Municipalities Water Utility project includes a significant investment of R300 million into water infrastructure. This initiative has already captured the attention of a publicly listed company, and there is a technical partner that is a subsidiary of that entity. The municipal manager indicated that there are up to seven additional assets in the pipeline. If this current phase is successful, the municipality eager to pursue similar solutions for those infrastructures. The ambitious goals of the project include the establishment of a water utility at the district level which will enhance service delivery. Rand Water has been appointed by the Department of Water and Sanitation as the implementing agent, utilising Section 63 of the Municipal Water Systems Act. This approach will help recover billions owed by the municipality while also bringing much-needed structure and excellence to the region.

In collaboration with the water board, the municipality, and private sector stakeholders, the partners are on a path to conceptualising and creating a robust utility that will benefit the community.

The responsibility to tackle the looming water crisis extends beyond development finance and needs to rally private investors to join in this vital mission. Collaborating with technology providers is crucial for discovering the most efficient and cost-effective solutions. Additionally, engaging with academia will help to enhance the understanding and develop the necessary skills. Encouraging broader stakeholder engagement can effectively address the challenges in the water and sanitation sectors. Together, everyone can unpack these issues and create a brighter future for all.



Topic: Private Sector Participation in Water and Sanitation Moderator: Laila Horton, Associate Director, Deloitte Africa

Panellists:

Sourav Agarwal:	Director, Deloitte India
Johan Lubbe:	Head of Water, Partnership Office
Dhevan Govender:	General Manager Business Development, Suez Group
Mecuria Assefaw:	Water Security and Sanitation Manager, AfDB
Damane Hlalele:	Director, Planning & Advisory, Arup
Andre Kruger:	CEO, PPP Training Online
Dorcas Kayo:	Director Infrastructure Finance, National Treasury
Tomas Adcock:	Senior Investment Officer, IFC

In unicipal Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) are pivotal in driving high-quality infrastructure projects that meet the needs of local communities. To enhance the delivery and calibre of these initiatives, strategic improvements in the consultative process and project sponsorship are essential. Deloitte's Laila Horton led the panel discussion as follows.

In the context of municipal public-private partnerships (PPPs), what strategies can we implement to enhance the delivery of high-quality projects? How can we increase both the volume and the calibre of these initiatives?

Focusing on the municipal context, one of the critical areas when implementing a PPP is the consultative process. It is essential to streamline this phase to avoid delaying the value chain timeline necessary for achieving financial closure. The proposed amendments currently under public consultation include measures to expedite this consultation phase. Additionally, there needs to be an enhancement of the capacity of project sponsors to effectively identify, plan, and package PPP initiatives. Strengthening the competencies of sponsors is crucial for preparing projects that can successfully navigate the value chain and attract investment.

Financial support mechanisms play a critical role in addressing the viability gap associated with PPPs. Many potential PPP projects face significant challenges and are often stalled due to financial constraints. This viability gap can hinder the successful implementation of these projects. At the national level actively advocating for a comprehensive approach to funding is taking







place. This involves examining a wide array of financial resources and support systems that include government funding, private investment, and grants focused on specific areas such as climate change. Strategically combining these various sources of funding will not only enhance the financial viability of PPP projects but it will also ensure that they align with broader national objectives, particularly those related to sustainability and environmental resilience.

It is essential for stakeholders to collaborate and prioritise the closing of the financial gap in PPP initiatives. This will not only facilitate the advancement of critical infrastructure projects but also foster economic growth and support the transition to a more sustainable future. Addressing these financial challenges proactively will enable everyone to harness the full potential of PPPs for the benefit of society as a whole.

What advice can you give to both the public and private sector to enable successful PPPs?

PPPs are intricate arrangements that differ significantly from conventional procurement methods. When considering a PPP in South Africa, there are three key pieces of advice to keep in mind. First and foremost, the seriousness of the tender process cannot be overstated. Engaging deeply and responsibly in this process is crucial, as it forms the foundation for the entire partnership. Entities must ensure that they understand the requirements and nuances of the process to secure a successful outcome. Secondly, affordability and lastly, bankability are vital considerations. It's essential that the proposed projects are financially viable and attractive to investors. This means careful planning and analysis to demonstrate that projects can be funded and maintained without placing undue strain on public resources. It is imperative that utilities seek the support of their local councils and secure political buy-in. Without strong backing from these key stakeholders, the initiative may lack legitimacy and commitment. Political support can also facilitate smoother negotiations and help overcome potential obstacles during the implementation phase. In summary, a successful PPP hinges on a thorough understanding of the tender process, financial viability, and robust political and public support.

The National Treasury should develop instruments or tools to support various utilities in addressing issues of affordability and bankability. By doing so, an environment can be created that encourages investors and larger companies to feel confident in investing. To achieve inclusive economic growth, it's essential to recognise that water and sanitation are critical drivers of progress. While the private sector has the potential to invest fully, it's crucial to implement the necessary reforms to facilitate this investment.

When it comes to navigating the complexities of PPPs, another critical step is choosing an appropriate transaction advisor. It is essential to select an advisor who not only has extensive experience with PPPs but also possesses relevant technical references that demonstrate their expertise in this specific area. Simply conducting a feasibility study is insufficient; a project requires a thorough understanding of all the nuances involved to reach financial close successfully. This includes not only assessing the project's viability but also addressing various financial, legal, and operational challenges that may arise during the process. A seasoned transaction advisor will be familiar with the intricacies of funding structures, risk management, and

stakeholder negotiations, ensuring that every aspect of the project is meticulously handled. Therefore, investing time in finding the right advisor with a proven track record is crucial for transforming a project from the initial feasibility stage all the way to a successful financial close.

Could you explain the Design-Build-Operate (DBO) model and the Hybrid Annuity model, including their implementation and methodologies as seen in India?

In the Design-Build-Operate (DBO) model, the total capital cost is completely funded by the government. However, it is important to note that most contemporary DBO models are structured as performance-based contracts. These models are applicable to various aspects of water supply, including treatment and distribution infrastructure, where essential components are integrated.

India currently boasts two to three significant government programmes in which the entire capital expenditure is funded entirely by the Government of India. One notable initiative is the Jal Jeevan Mission, aimed at ensuring that clean and safe drinking water is accessible to every citizen across the nation. This ambitious programme seeks to transform the water supply landscape in India, addressing a critical need for reliable water resources. In addition, there is a distinct programme focused on the revitalisation and cleaning of the country's rivers. These water bodies play a crucial role in urban ecosystems, often flowing through or near cities where they are negatively impacted by sewage and waste disposal. This river cleaning initiative aims to restore the natural purity of the rivers, enhancing both environmental health and the quality of life for communities that depend on these waterways.

Another programme known as Namami Gange Project, which targets one of India's largest rivers. To clean the river, there is a programme that has a substantial budget of approximately US\$3 billion, focuses on financing Highways Infrastructure Trust projects (HTP) and related infrastructure enhancements in 20 towns connected to this vital river. Deloitte served as transaction advisors to the Government of India, where they played a key role in designing the first hybrid annuity model for wastewater projects in the country.

This innovative model developed involves a balanced financing approach: 40% of the capital costs are covered by the Indian government, while the remaining 60% is sourced from the private sector through a combination of debt and equity. This partnership enables leveraging both public and private resources effectively. The government, at the national level, is tasked with standardising bidding documents and ensuring the financing of these projects. Overall, this collaborative effort aims to foster sustainable infrastructure development.

To achieve success on a national scale, it is imperative to establish a robust authority that possesses substantial capacity, adequate funding, and effective coordination mechanisms. Furthermore, and perhaps most crucially, it requires strong political support that involves motivation from the highest levels of government, starting from the Prime Minister of India down to the top ministers. The Namami Gange Project is recognised as a flagship programme for the nation, and for such an ambitious programmatic effort to flourish, these four elements: capacity, financing, coordination, and political backing are essential.

What seems to be holding up WPO's progress? Are there other concerns about wastewater reuse or maybe the involvement of the private sector?

From the perspective of the WPO establishment, it faced the challenge of establishing its identity and raising awareness about the services the office provides. This process required a considerable amount of time and effort, as the WPO had to design comprehensive programmes and service offerings tailored to its audience. However, collaborating with municipalities can be particularly complex. The environment is often challenging due to the autonomy of each municipality, which means that it operates independently and has its own set of regulations and priorities. Moreover, the political landscape plays a crucial role in the WPO's interactions, making it important to navigate these relationships carefully to ensure successful partnerships.

Secondly, financing the water sector presents challenges, but establishing a strong revenue stream is crucial for attracting private sector investment in projects. The initiatives being undertaken by Treasury, particularly regarding the reforms in metro services and trading services, are highly commendable. These efforts will create a supportive environment for implementing more private sector projects through the PPP framework. The establishment of a single point of accountability can enhance collaboration and efficiency in bringing these projects to fruition.

Collaborating with municipalities is essential and recognising the importance of integrating private sector participation in projects. It is crucial that there is a willingness from the municipalities to embrace models such as PPP to move forward effectively. While it can be a lengthy process to cultivate this cooperation and secure council support, it ultimately strengthens initiatives. For instance, the WPO has currently engaged with several municipalities for a non-revenue water performance-based contracting (PBC) project, yet the contract has not been finalised. This highlights some of the challenges in administrative processes. It is also worth noting that the traditional perspective has been that municipalities should take the lead in initiating PPP projects. However, many municipalities may lack the necessary knowledge and skills to navigate this complex process.

There are many positive developments at the government level, particularly in terms of reforms and the establishment of licensing mechanisms. The implementation of new norms and standards by the department is particularly promising. These changes are set to foster a more favourable environment that encourages progress. Rather than taking control from municipalities, stakeholders increasingly aim to gently steer municipalities in a more productive direction, helping them to adapt and improve in key areas.

Closing remarks

hrough collaborative efforts, we can all chart a course that effectively supports the water and sanitation sector. This marks the beginning of numerous future engagements where we can unite individuals and organisations, fostering the collective drive essential for the transformative changes we seek. Our capacity to thoroughly understand the challenges at hand and to collaboratively devise innovative solutions is fundamental to our mission. We need to rely on partnerships and need fresh, creative ideas to propel us forward. The diverse expertise and perspectives of everyone that participated will play a crucial role in helping us fulfil our goals and make a meaningful impact in our communities.



ASHLEIGH THEOPHANIDES Chief Sustainability Officer, Deloitte Africa

Editorial team

Thakhani Murulana Senior Consultant: Insights Deloitte Africa Tel: +27 11 806 6293 Email: tmurulana@deloitte.co.za

Contact us:



Greg Rammego Government & Public Services Industry Leader, Deloitte Africa Tel: +27 11 806 5255 Email: grammego@deloitte.co.za



Ashleigh Theophanides Chief Sustainability Officer, Deloitte Africa Tel: +27 11 209 8112 Email: atheophanides@deloitte.co.za



Laila Horton Associate Director, Deloitte Africa Tel: +27 11 806 5663 Email: lahorton@deloitte.co.za

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