



Alliance to Save Energy SAVING WATER AND ENERGY Amaoti Informal Settlement eThekweni, South Africa



COMMUNITY CARETAKERS MAKE DELIVERY OF WET SERVICES POSSIBLE IN THE INFORMAL SETTLEMENT OF AMAOTI

BACKGROUND

The Amaoti informal area close to Kwa Mashu – falling under the jurisdiction of the eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality – has been characterized by high levels of water wastage and illegal water use. Most members of the community had taken advantage of the availability of water and illegally connected to a primary water network originally intended to supply the community with water via standpipes. These connections were poorly done and thus caused major leaks, resulting in potable water wastage on a grand scale.

Although the municipality resolved to improve the level of service to the community, they faced a challenge in formalizing connections and water use and coercing the community to take ownership of consumption and installed infrastructure.



The informal area of Amaoti, close to Kwa Mashu in eThekweni.

Key Results

- Major reduction in water wastage of around 85,000 kℓ per month.
- Energy savings equivalent to 1,432 GWh per annum.

As a solution, through the Increasing Sustainable Local Government Services program of USAID, the Alliance to Save Energy proposed instituting a caretaker management structure at the community level to inform, educate, alert, train, and persuade the community in the appropriate use of water services and a more formal service delivery regime.

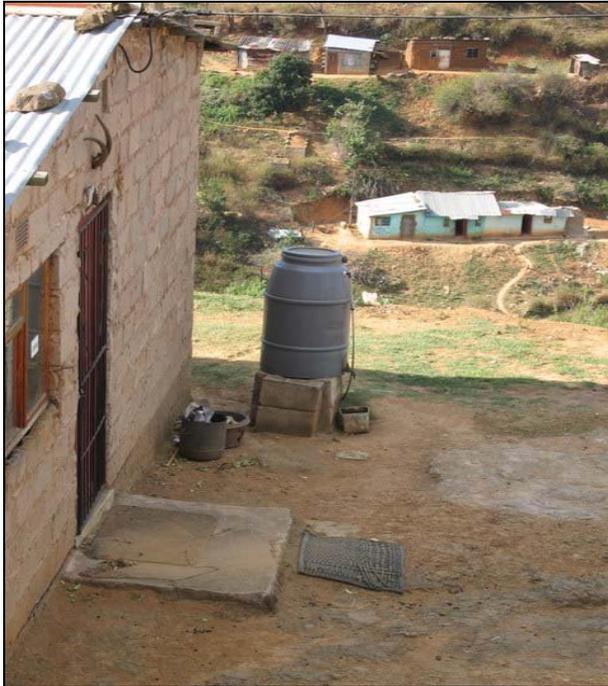
Formalized service provision includes the provision of Free Basic Water by the municipality in the amount of 6,000 liters per month per household. This free water provision, accompanied by wise water use and improved consumptive habits, eliminates the need to connect illegally to the water network.

IMPLEMENTATION

After a formal recruitment process involving screening and interviewing of potential candidates, caretakers were appointed from the local community and worked alongside local contractors responsible for the installation of water pipes, individual household connections with ground tanks, and electronic control devices supplying the Free Basic Water allocation per day.



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Typical ground tank installation in Amaoti



A Caretaker at work in Amaoti

Caretakers have successfully interacted face to face with the community, persuading households to improve water use habits, respect water services, and ensure that newly provided infrastructure and services are respected.

The combined impact of the technical and social intervention has resulted in an obvious behavioral shift, a major reduction in water wastage of around 85,000 kℓ per month, and a more formalized service delivery milieu. These changes have resulted in a more sustainable service delivery environment.

Based on these outcomes and the fact that illegal connections have been willingly removed by individual members of the community themselves, the caretaker model piloted in this project is seen as a success and has great potential and merit in other areas of South Africa and other regions faced with similar challenges.

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