

**REPORT ON A KNOWLEDGE-SHARING SESSION:**

ROLL OUT OF BASIC WATER & SANITATION SERVICES THROUGH THE MIG PROGRAMME

**PURPOSE**

This submission summarises proceedings of a knowledge-sharing session themed: “*Roll out of basic water and sanitation services through the Municipal Infrastructure Grant (MIG) programme*” held on 19 March 2021.

**SUMMARY OF SUBMISSION**

The South African government established the MIG programme in 2004 following a Cabinet decision to consolidate and streamline several municipal infrastructure grants. The programme was part of the government’s major reforms in line with the Constitution and the Municipal Systems Act of 2003, which calls for municipalities to be development centres controlling services and infrastructure projects within their jurisdictions. The session learnt that over R180 bn has been spent on the programme since 2004, with 54% of the budget dedicated to water and sanitation infrastructure. The MIG investment has significantly improved many families and communities, providing access to roads, water, energy services and decent sanitation.

The session highlighted that the programme achieved 98% performance on expenditure during 2004-2009. However, expenditure dropped to 85% between 2010 and 2014. In response, the government instituted interventions, including establishing the Municipal Infrastructure Support Agent in 2012 to provide technical support to struggling municipalities. The interventions improved programme performance from 85% to 93% in the five years to 2019. However, in 2020, the Covid-19 pandemic resulted in a performance drop of more than 10%. Participants cautioned about using expenditure as a proxy for performance and recommended that actual physical infrastructure delivery be added as a performance indicator.

Going forward and to improve programme performance, participants recommended that sector departments, provinces and key stakeholders provide more technical support, as well as undertake regular on-site verifications to identify significant bottlenecks for a quick resolution.