

# Water *for* Cities

WATER AND SANITATION IN AFRICA:  
SOLUTIONS AND SCENARIOS

*Of all our natural resources,*  
**water underpins sustainable development  
as perhaps none other.**

*Food, energy, health, industry, biodiversity—there is no sphere of  
planetary life or human endeavor untouched by water.<sup>1</sup>*

One of the World's Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 6) focuses on water,  
and calls for **ensuring access to water and sanitation for all.**

Sub-Sahara Africa  
can address the  
strong growth in water  
demand expected for  
2030 and meet SDG6  
provided it starts  
addressing its current  
water challenges and  
embraces opportunities  
that **improved  
wastewater  
management**  
can provide.<sup>3</sup>

**Stormwater harvesting**  
can have multiple benefits as an alternative untapped  
water supply source which can improve water  
security for cities. If not treated to potable  
standards, it can be used for irrigation.<sup>2</sup>

By simply **fixing leaks** in  
our global urban supply systems  
we can save **32 billion** cubic  
meters of treated water each year.<sup>4</sup>

**Investments in  
small-scale projects**  
that provide access to safe water and basic  
sanitation in Africa could return an estimated economic  
gain of approximately US\$28.4 billion a year, or 5% of GDP,  
based on a 2016 report.<sup>5</sup>

In Africa,  
under-collection  
of water bills has  
been estimated at  
US\$500 million  
per year. Improving  
**the collection  
rate of water  
bills** is an obvious  
way of increasing  
water revenues  
without raising  
tariffs.<sup>6</sup>

**New and innovative finance  
mechanisms and models**  
are required to support operation and maintenance of existing water and sanitation  
infrastructure and investment in new infrastructure for our shared urban future.

1 <https://wle.cgiar.org/thrive/2015/09/21/water-flows-through-sdgs>

2 Carden, K. & L. Fisher-Jeffes. 2017. Stormwater harvesting could help South Africa manage its water shortages. Available at: <http://theconversation.com/stormwater-harvesting-could-help-south-africa-manage-its-water-shortages-74377>

3 UNWater. 2017. The United Nations Water Development Report 2017: Facts and Figures. Wastewater the Untapped Resource. Available at: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002475/247553e.pdf>

4 United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) 2014 cited in World Bank. 2016. "High & Dry: Climate Change,

Water and the Economy". World Bank, Washington, D.C. License: Creative Commons Attribution CC BY 3.0 IGO.

5 (UNEP, n.d.), cited in UNWater. 2016. The United Nations World Water Development Report 2016: Water & Jobs: Facts and Figures. Available at: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002440/244041e.pdf>

6 United Nations World Water Assessment Programme. 2012. World Water Development Report 4: Managing Water under Uncertainty and Risk: Facts and Figures