



African Water and  
Sanitation Association

Association Africaine de  
l'Eau et de l'Assainissement

AfWASA / AAEA

# Report of the 95<sup>th</sup> AfWASA Strategic and Technological Council (STC)

21 - 24 July 2025 | Lilongwe, Malawi



EXECUTIVE DIRECTION



# INTRODUCTION



The African Water and Sanitation Association (AfWASA) held the 95th session of its Strategic and Technological Council (STC) from 21 to 24 July 2025 at the Bingu International Convention Center (BICC) in Lilongwe, the capital of the Republic of Malawi.

Organized in close collaboration with the Lilongwe Water Board (LWB) and the Ministry of Water and Sanitation of Malawi, this major event marked a new milestone in the scientific, technical, and institutional cooperation dynamic driven by AfWASA across the continent. Under the inspiring theme “Green Economy and Climate Resilience in Africa,” the meeting brought together over 200 participants from 22 countries, experts, researchers, leaders of public utilities, policymakers, and technical and financial partners to discuss innovative strategies for

sustainable and climate-resilient development in the WASH sector.

Over four days, the proceedings included high-level panels, thematic conferences, technical sessions within the Specialist Groups, as well as field visits and an exhibition forum dedicated to sector innovations.

As a true platform for exchange and knowledge sharing, this 95th STC session strengthened synergies among stakeholders, showcased models of financial and environmental resilience, and laid the foundations for a stronger Africa capable of guaranteeing universal, sustainable, equitable, and inclusive access to water and sanitation.

## Session 1 : Opening Ceremony



The opening ceremony marked the official launch of the 95th Strategic and Technical Council (STC), attended by senior Malawian authorities, representatives of AfWASA member institutions, and numerous international partners.

It reaffirmed the pan-African vision of the Association, built on resilience, sustainability, and solidarity within the water and sanitation sector.

The remarks delivered by the Managing Director of LWB, the Executive Director of AfWASA, the Chairperson of the STC, the Permanent Secretary, and the Malawian Minister of Water and Sanitation all emphasized the crucial importance of regional cooperation in addressing climate challenges. Held under the theme “Green Economy and Climate Resilience in Africa,” the ceremony represented a powerful moment of political and institutional convergence, symbolizing collective commitment toward a greener and more inclusive future.

It concluded with an official group photo, followed by the inauguration of the exhibition, presided over by the Minister, where eighteen companies and organizations showcased their technological innovations in support of the sustainable transformation of Africa's WASH sector.

## Session 2 : Spotlight on the Malawian Water and Sanitation Sector

This session provided an analytical immersion into Malawi's national policies, infrastructure, and strategies for water and sanitation management.

The discussions highlighted the country's significant progress in climate resilience planning, water resources management, and the implementation of sustainable community-based projects.

A panel of national experts Dr. Russell Chidya, Dr. Chikumbusyo Kawonga, Willies Mwandira, Mr. Osborne Shela, and Mr. Benon Yassin presented respectively on the impacts of climate change on water infrastructure, strategies for managing droughts and floods, and the role of environmental partnerships.

Malawian and international experts shared their experiences on local governance, intersectoral cooperation, and responses to climate crises. The session enabled participants to identify lessons transferable to other African contexts, while



showcasing Malawi's leadership as a model of coordination among public, academic, and technical stakeholders.

## Session 3 : Technological Forum

The technology forum served as a platform for exchange among manufacturers, operators, and researchers on innovative solutions aimed at enhancing operational performance.

Three major presentations marked this session: the Hungarian Water Partnership, presented by Dr. Károly Kovács, which showcased innovative water treatment solutions recognized by the United Nations; XYLEM, represented by Mr. Lan Rodgers, which highlighted smart water network management approaches; and AVK, presented by Mr. Prosper Shoniwa, which demonstrated valve solutions designed for resilient infrastructure.

These presentations by leading companies illustrated practical approaches for sustainable and efficient water system management. The main focus of the session was the promotion of technology as a driver of sustainability, energy efficiency, and climate resilience. Discussions encouraged



public-private partnerships and the integration of local solutions into national policies, reflecting AfWASA's commitment to connecting technological innovation with social impact in the African WASH sector.

## Session 4 : Green Economy and Climate Resilience in Africa



This high-level thematic session explored in depth the links between ecological transition and the performance of the water and sanitation sector.

Presentations by experts from Morocco, Germany, Burkina Faso, and Malawi demonstrated the

relevance of the green economy model as a driver of energy efficiency, waste recovery, and reduction of non-revenue water.

The contributions covered several key themes: Mr. Mourad El Khalfani presented concepts and strategies for integrating the green economy into the WASH sector; Mr. Manuel Krauß assessed the AGTIWAS and GAPWAS projects; Eng. Gustaff Chikasema discussed the reduction of non-revenue water as a climate lever; Mr. Tontama Sanou highlighted the energy recovery of sludge for sustainable agriculture; and Dr. Winford Masanjala provided a macroeconomic perspective on the green economy.

By fostering inter-African experience sharing, the session helped guide policies toward sustainable economic models while emphasizing the importance of North-South partnerships to accelerate the environmental transformation of the sector.

## Session 5 : Exhibitors' Forum



The exhibitors' forum served as a dynamic platform for dialogue among industry players, operators, and decision-makers, aimed at promoting technical and

industrial innovations.

Ten exhibitors presented their innovations, covering technologies for reducing water losses, monitoring and automation systems, and energy-saving solutions in water treatment and distribution.

These presentations showcased the diversity and relevance of available technologies to enhance the performance and resilience of water and sanitation services in Africa. The forum also fostered business opportunities and technological cooperation, strengthening AfWASA's role as a catalyst for networking among sector stakeholders.

By providing greater visibility to both local and international companies, the session encouraged the promotion of African expertise and the integration of sustainable solutions into public operators' strategies.

## Session 6 : Institutional Presentations and AfWASA Reports



This session offered a structured review of AfWASA's activities and the key takeaways from the 22nd Congress held in Kampala.

The Executive Director presented the Association's major institutional achievements, particularly in capacity building, partnerships, and continental initiatives such as GAPWAS. Additionally, an update was provided on the preparations for the 23rd



Congress in Yaoundé (2026), highlighting the growing momentum of the organizational and scientific framework.

This session served as a moment to assess the alignment between AfWASA's 2025–2026 Strategic Vision and field implementation, while strengthening trust and collaboration among members and partners.

## Sessions 7 : : Work in Specialist Groups and Technical Visits

These sessions formed the technical core of the STC, engaging AfWASA's seven Specialist Groups (competence development, water quality, non-revenue water, inclusive sanitation, financing, climate change, and technological innovations).

The working sessions enabled the sharing of research findings, the formulation of technical recommendations, and the identification of institutional strengthening priorities.

Field visits notably to drinking water and wastewater treatment plants provided participants with a concrete immersion into the resilience solutions implemented by the Lilongwe Water Board (LWB).

These sessions strengthened AfWASA's scientific and operational community spirit, translating its mission into tangible and sustainable actions serving the African continent.



## Session 8 : Closing Ceremony



In conclusion of the 95th session of the Strategic and Technical Council (STC), the STC Chairperson presented the AUDC (Africa Utility Data Collaborative) methodology an innovative approach designed to enhance the profitability and efficiency of water and sanitation operators without requiring heavy capital investments.

Based on strategic levers supported by performance indicators, this integrated framework aims to optimize technical, financial, and organizational performance while strengthening infrastructure sustainability and user satisfaction.

Ms. Géraldine Mpouma, Vice-Chairperson of the

STC, then provided a summary of the three days of deliberations, commending the quality of the discussions and the collective commitment of participants.

She expressed her deep gratitude to the Malawian authorities, notably Hon. Abida Sidik Mia, Minister of Water and Sanitation, and Mr. Elias Chimulambe, Principal Secretary, for their warm welcome and support. Concluding the proceedings, she invited all participants to Yaoundé, Cameroon, for the next STC session in November 2026, as a prelude to the 23rd AfWASA International Congress and Exhibition, scheduled for February 2026.

## Session 9 : Forum of Young Water and Sanitation Professionals



The participation report of the 95th Strategic and Technical Council (STC) of AfWASA, held in Lilongwe from July 21 to 24, 2025, highlights the strong involvement of young professionals in the water and sanitation sector.

Coordinated by Djalila Umutangampundu, it underscores the dynamic networking, capacity building, and collaboration among national chapters.

Discussions with representatives from water utilities (SODECI, ONEA, and LWB) enabled the updating of research data and the exploration of scientific synergies.

The Youth Side Event, chaired by the Executive

Director of AfWASA and the Managing Director of LWB, culminated in the adoption of the Lilongwe Declaration a powerful call to action by young professionals for an inclusive and climate-resilient WASH sector.

The report recommends the digitalization of processes, the creation of a structured youth professional network, and the promotion of local innovations. The quality of the organization and the active participation of delegates were highly commended, confirming Malawi as a model of African commitment and leadership in water and sanitation governance.

### Focus on the Lilongwe Declaration

The Malawi Declaration of Young Water and Sanitation Professionals reaffirms the commitment of African youth to transform the sector through innovation, climate resilience, and Pan-African cooperation.

Inspired by the 2023 Abidjan Declaration, it calls for the institutionalization of youth participation within AfWASA, the creation of mentorship and funding

mechanisms for youth-led initiatives, and the systematic integration of sanitation into national programs and chapters.

This declaration embodies a unified vision of a generation ready to act for a sustainable, inclusive, and sovereign Africa in shaping its own water policies.



## RECOMMENDATIONS

## 1. Integrate Climate Resilience into Sectoral Planning



National policies and strategies should systematically incorporate climate resilience into the design, management, and maintenance of WASH infrastructure.

Adopting risk-based approaches and using hydrometeorological forecasting and adaptive management tools will help ensure service continuity in the face of droughts, floods, and other climate hazards.

## 2. Promote a Green, Circular, and Inclusive Economy

Operators and policymakers are encouraged to develop models based on energy efficiency, waste recovery, and wastewater reuse.

The circular economy including energy production from sludge and resource recovery for agriculture should become a pillar of public policy, while strengthening the inclusion of women and youth in decision-making processes.



## 3. Accelerate Digitalization and Technological Innovation



Digital transformation is a key driver for improving service performance and sustainability.

States and operators should invest in smart network management, predictive maintenance, real-time monitoring, and data collection, while supporting startups and fostering Pan-African technology transfer and innovation ecosystems.

## 4. Strengthen Institutional and Human Capacities

Capacity development is essential to address emerging sector challenges.

The African Water and Sanitation Academy (AWASA) and regional universities should play a leading role in continuous training, green engineering, performance management, and innovative financing to build the next generation of skilled professionals.



## 5. Mobilize Sustainable and Inclusive Financing



Sector resilience depends on enhanced cooperation between governments, donors, the private sector, and technical partners.

AfWASA will facilitate access to green and climate funds and promote innovative mechanisms such as green bonds, public-private partnerships, and thematic investment funds to ensure the long-term financial sustainability of public water and sanitation services.

## 6. Ensure Follow-up, Cooperation, and Knowledge Sharing

A follow-up mechanism for CST recommendations should be established, with a progress report before the 2026 session.

Regional cooperation and cross-country experience sharing will be strengthened to capitalize on success stories, particularly those related to water loss reduction, resource management, and awareness-raising on water as both a driver and a victim of climate change.





## HIGHLIGHTS

## Address by the Managing Director of Lwb

Mr. Silli Mbewe, Managing Director of the Lilongwe Water Board (LWB), expressed gratitude to AfWASA for entrusting Malawi with the organization of the 95th STC session and warmly welcomed participants from across the continent.

He emphasized the strategic role of the STC as a driver of innovation and technical direction within the Association. Highlighting the relevance of the theme “Green Economy and Climate Resilience in Africa,” he underscored LWB’s efforts to promote renewable energy, resilient infrastructure, and community empowerment. He also stressed the importance of strengthening regional collaboration and technical cooperation among operators.

Finally, he reaffirmed LWB’s commitment to sustainability and excellence in water and sanitation service management.



**Mr Silli Mbewe**  
Managing Director of the  
Lilongwe Water Board

## Address by the Chair of the STC



**Eng. Mahmoud Lutaaya**  
Chair of the STC

Eng. Mahmoud Lutaaya, Chair of the STC, expressed his appreciation to the Malawian authorities and the LWB team for their exemplary organization of the event. He reaffirmed the essential role of the STC as AfWASA’s technical arm, ensuring knowledge sharing and fostering innovation across the sector. Emphasizing the relevance of the green economy and climate resilience theme, he called for stronger institutions and continued reform of the STC. He also urged the structuring of specialist groups, the attraction of new talent, and the expansion of expertise areas. In conclusion, he invited participants to engage in collective reflection and exchange to co-create solutions tailored to African realities.

## Address by the Executive Director of AfWASA

The Executive Director of AfWASA thanked the Malawian authorities for their exemplary commitment to the water sector, praising the creation of a dedicated ministry. He highlighted the relevance of the theme “Green Economy and Climate Resilience in Africa” amid growing demographic pressures and climate change challenges. He recalled AfWASA’s tangible achievements, including more than USD 25 million mobilized and millions of people benefiting from improved water and sanitation access. He also emphasized AfWASA’s concrete actions in Malawi through training, institutional support, and capacity development. Finally, he called for collective mobilization ahead of the 23rd AfWASA Congress in Yaoundé (2026) and urged continued efforts to make access to water and sanitation a universal and effective right.



**Mr Olivier GOSSO**  
AfWASA Executive  
Director

## Address by the Principal Secretary

The Principal Secretary of Malawi expressed his country’s pride in hosting the 95th STC session, commending AfWASA’s leadership and the participation of delegates from 28 African countries. He highlighted the theme’s importance, placing water at the center of adaptation strategies for a green and resilient Africa. Emphasizing the role of public institutions as engines of innovation and sustainability, he presented the conference as a platform of political and technical influence for the continent. He underscored the strategic opportunity this event offered Malawi in terms of regional cooperation and visibility. Finally, he reaffirmed the government’s commitment to working closely with AfWASA and its partners to build a sustainable and inclusive future.



**M. Elias Chimulambe**

Permanent Secretary to the  
Minister of Water and  
Sanitation of Malawi

## Address by the Minister of Water and Sanitation of Malawi



**Hon. Abida Sidik Mia**

Minister of Water and  
Sanitation of Malawi

Hon. Abida Sidik Mia expressed Malawi’s pride in hosting the 95th STC session and commended AfWASA as a catalyst for transforming the water and sanitation sector across Africa. She underlined the relevance of the theme on the green economy and climate resilience, reminding that water is both a victim and a solution to the climate crisis. Presenting Malawi’s key initiatives, she highlighted efforts to promote renewable energy, protect catchment areas, and improve access to water in both urban and rural areas. She stressed the need for climate-smart investments and innovative financing mechanisms, such as green bonds and public-private partnerships (PPPs). Finally, she called for an inclusive approach that promotes women’s leadership and youth innovation before officially declaring the conference open



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