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AFRICAN UTILITY WEEK PREVIEW

Company to address water investment and tech advances at AUW

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State-owned water utility Ghana Water Company technology and innovation manager **Richard Otoo** will highlight the importance of water management as well as the impact of technology on a utility company in transition during African Utility Week (AUW).

The conference will focus on the increasing need for investment in water solutions by the public and private sector to allow for universal access, water security and resilient societies. The conference will also showcase how

partnerships, financial models and the latest technological advances can make the greatest impact on meeting Africa's water demand.

Otoo says people need to understand the value of water because issues, such as those that have unfolded in Cape Town, could happen anywhere on the continent. "There should be full cost recovery and, preferably, reservations for future investments, such as new treatment plants and technologies, to avert the issues that Cape Town is facing. Once people understand the economic value of water, willingness to pay for the long-run marginal cost of water may not be a problem."

He maintains that a detailed study on resource options and availability would be a way to start looking into solutions for South



RICHARD OTOO

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Africa's water shortage. He also recommends demand management and using drip irrigation for gardening. "Technology and science would have the greatest impact on Cape Town's water demand." Further, mild climate change effects, the high cost of energy, water theft, deteriorating infrastructure and budgetary constraints are some of the challenges that African water utility companies face, which Otoo says can affect public utilities' prospects of increasing capacity and providing water for citizens. ■

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The difference between true love and dinosaurs: We're sure that dinosaurs once existed on this earth.