



INTERNET ARTICLE

DWS celebrate international Women's Day with rural women in Nkomazi

13 March 2017

The Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) celebrated the International Women's Day in the form of a dialogue with rural women at Kamhushwa Stadium in Nkomazi Local Municipality on 10 March 2017. The celebration was meant to give women the opportunity to discuss and share their challenges and achievements.

The International Women's Day is celebrated annually to advocate for women's rights and to reflect on progress made in the upliftment of women. The day is also used to celebrate the lives and achievements of many women who against all odds have managed to make a difference in their communities.

In opening the dialogue, the Executive Mayor of Nkomazi Local Municipality, Cllr Thulisile Khoza said, "I would like to thank the Department of Water and Sanitation for providing this opportunity for the women of Nkomazi to discuss issues that affect them in their daily lives. Government is calling on women to open up and tell the truth as the truth will set them free. Men take advantage of vulnerable women and it is crucial that we have the opportunity to discuss and share our challenges. *"Umuntfu wesifazane utfwele kamatima"*. Areas such as Mangweni, especially women are benefitting toilets from the DWS sanitation project implemented in the municipality."

Women raised their issues which touched mainly on abuse and challenges of water supply. They touched on sexual, emotional and physical abuse and encouraged each other to come out and report such cases as most of the time the perpetrators of the abuse are people known to the victims or family members.

The women, especially the elderly complained about water supply challenges and that they have to walk long distances to get water and their wheelbarrows are already broken. A young woman by the name of Hlengiwe highlighted that the water supply problem is a result of the actions of community members. She stated "the problem is with us people in terms of illegal connections and the filling of jojo tanks affecting the pressure. Traditional authorities must also work with the municipality and not dish out stands irresponsibly as the people in the new



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stands without municipal connections embark on illegal connections affecting water supply to the deserving residents. We all need to work together in a responsible manner”.

In his response, the Acting Provincial Head, Mr Masala Mulaudzi stated that DWS is discussing with the municipality regarding the Sibange Bulk Supply Pipeline which will relieve the water challenges for most communities in the Nkomazi Local Municipality.

In her closing remarks, the Executive Mayor encouraged the women to be clean and hygienic and stop dumping disposable nappies in the rivers and streams as this affects water quality and the little available water. She also urged women to talk to each other and correct their wrongs.

Themba Khoza