



## INTERNET ARTICLE

### **Minister Mchunu calls for commitment and effective communication with the public**

07 March 2023

On Monday, 06 March 2023, Minister of Water and Sanitation, Senzo Mchunu invited all communicators of the Department – from national to regions – to an urgent and mandatory meeting at Birchwood Hotel and Conference centre in Boksburg, Gauteng.

The purpose of the meeting was to obtain commitment from Communications personnel towards improving the departmental communication mandate.

Addressing a full house of communicators, Minister Mchunu commenced his speech by highlighting the importance of the communication function, defining it as a “catalyst for information flow” hence it is imperative for communicators to fully understand their roles and do their work diligently.

Minister Mchunu continued to encourage vigilance across all communication channels that the Department uses actively.

Further, he suggested that communicators within any communication space must utilize all the necessary communication resources to reach out to the public. He emphasised the importance of establishing partnerships with private communication providers, such as journalists, to expand our target audience.

He added that it is vital for communicators to communicate messages relevant to water and sanitation services, because without showcasing the work of the Department the public would not be informed and that would cause major issues for our people.

"A vital component of information flow is communication, which is why without this function the Department cannot inform the public about issues that affect them daily. As the whole universe depends on clean water for survival, it is worth showcasing the work that the Department is doing to help solve the water crisis affecting all communities", he said.

The Deputy Director General of Corporate Support Services, Ms Nthabiseng Fundakubi, gave feedback to the Minister on the structure of Chief Directorate: Communication Services (which was recently adopted by the Department). She further explained challenges pertaining to the financial status (and the high rate of vacant positions) within the Chief Directorate.

The next speaker was Ms Lakela Kaunda, a staunch communicator who is Deputy Director-

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General in a government department. Echoing the sentiments of the Minister, Ms Kaunda described communication as an extremely important function in bringing hope to frustrated communities hence communicators are essential in disseminating information and having crucial talks with these communities.

"It is imperative to populate information about the Department (and about where the Minister is visiting) so that the public can come and meet the Minister. We all know how frustrating it is to be excluded, so communication is a means for inclusion of the public because information and services are about the public in the end. Keep these communities posted and help them understand that the Department is doing something about situations," Kaunda said.

Communicators expressed their gratitude about the Minister's call to meet with them, saying it had never happened before.

In his closing remarks, Minister Mchunu made announcements about a series of meetings he would engage in, inclusive of: a meeting with municipalities, MMS, Rand Water and the regional office on water efficiency; a media briefing he would conduct in March 2023; a meeting with Amakhosi at the end of March 2023; and additionally, a meeting with the media and mayors to ensure communication on tariffs and investment projects.

**Mashile Tshigofatso**

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