



INTERNET ARTICLE

DWS adopts Benjamin Primary School as part of Intervention Project

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The Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS), in partnership with sector stakeholders through its Water and Sanitation Education Programme (WSEP) Intervention Project, has adopted Benjamin Primary School in Matsulu, City of Mbombela. The adoption, which took place during National Water Week on 24 March 2025, aligns with WSEP's commitment to celebrating special days and promoting sustainable water and sanitation practices.

Benjamin Primary School has been an active participant in the Baswa Le Meetse project, representing the Mpumalanga Province three times at the national level. The school secured third place in the music category in 2017, 2019, and 2022.

During a monitoring visit, the WSEP Coordinating Team identified gaps in the management of the school's toilet facilities, leading to its selection for adoption. The primary objective of this intervention is to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical implementation. Observations during the National Adjudications did not align with on-the-ground realities, prompting the need for structured support.

The Intervention Project focuses on four key pillars that will determine the school's water-wise capabilities:

- Water conservation
- Greening of the school
- Management of toilet facilities
- Good health and hygiene practices

Ehlanzeni District Municipality MMC for Technical Services, Cllr. Phazamisa Mathe, and Ms. Alice Sikhondze from the Lomshiyo Tribal Authority welcomed the initiative. They encouraged the community to support and safeguard the school, emphasizing that collective efforts will ensure lasting benefits.

Ms. Khomotso Malapane from the Department of Education urged learners to take responsibility for the resources provided. She expressed gratitude to stakeholders for their contributions and ongoing commitments. "There are significant resources coming into the school, but if you don't take care of them, they will disappear within a few years. Learn to respect and preserve what you have," she advised.

In her adoption speech, DWS Mpumalanga Provincial Head, Ms. Dudu Sifunda, emphasized the importance of water conservation in a water-scarce country. She encouraged learners to

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become water conservation ambassadors and actively contribute to solving water and sanitation challenges in their communities.

“I am pleased that the learners have demonstrated an understanding of the importance of water. Their role in addressing water wastage and promoting responsible usage is critical,” she stated.

Sifunda highlighted issues such as illegal connections and water leakages that hinder access to water. “While our focus is on the school, we will also extend our efforts to the broader community. Over the next two years, we aim to empower young learners to become problem-solvers in addressing national water challenges,” she added.

“As stakeholders, our commitment to Benjamin Primary School marks the beginning of a transformative journey. We will work together to create a conducive learning environment, ensuring that students feel at home and take pride in their school. This collaborative approach will leave a lasting legacy for both the school and the surrounding community,” she concluded.

Several contributions and commitments have already been made, including:

- School signage and a 10,000-litre JoJo tank from Silulumanzi
- Five 90-litre hippo roller drums and vegetable seed sachets from SANPARKS, Kruger National Park
- 25 pairs of water boots from KOBWA
- 10 indigenous and fruit trees from the Department of Forestry, Fisheries, and Environment
- Cleaning materials, soaps, and water buckets with taps from DWS Mpumalanga

Additionally, Mr. Vukani Mtya from DWS Head Office pledged to bring more stakeholders on board to ensure the long-term success of the intervention.

The adoption of Benjamin Primary School is a testament to the power of collaboration in addressing water and sanitation challenges. Through continued engagement, this initiative aims to foster a culture of sustainability and responsibility among young learners.

Themba Khoza

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