



water affairs

Department:  
Water Affairs  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**SPEECH DELIVERED BY HON REJOICE MABUDAFHASI, DEPUTY MINISTER OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS DURING THE BASWA LE MEESTE HANDING OVER OF MEDIA CLASSROOM CEREMONY IN ISAGONTLE PRIMARY SCHOOL, MOTHIBISTAD VILLAGE, NORTHERN CAPE**

**03 MAY 2011**

MEC for Education, Ms Chrisselda Cjiekela  
Executive Mayor, Mr Seweditse Gaobusiwe  
Councillors  
Chiefs  
Heads of Departments  
Chief Executive Officers  
Senior officials from various departments  
Principals, Educators and learners  
Members of the media  
Members of the community  
Ladies and gentlemen  
Good morning

It is indeed a great pleasure for me to be here today to celebrate the achievements of the South African youth as they strive to make positive impact to water challenges facing the country. We are gathered here to be educated by our children about water resource management and also to acknowledge the excellent work of our educators and parents despite the challenges they are faced with on daily basis.

South Africa, like many other countries in Africa, is faced with a huge challenge that is likely to become a future threat, if our water resources are not well managed, protected, used, conserved and developed in a sustainable manner. Due to developmental needs water demand is increasing rapidly but the amount of water remains the same.

Currently we are faced with challenges such as water wastage through leaks, polluted rivers, water quality etc. We all know that water is a catalyst for any development. “Without water there is no life, there will be no development, there will be manifestation of poverty.”

In order to ensure that there is enough water in our country we have embarked on a robust public education programme aimed at educating the citizens of our country about water resource management. Through this programme communities and schools will be equipped with knowledge and skills that will enable them to participate actively in natural resource management. They will take charge, be able to identify challenges, and make recommendations to the Department for final decision making, they will deal with all the irregularities in their areas. All community members and youth will be Water Ambassadors.

One of the programmes we are implementing is called 2020 Vision which targets youth in schools grades R-12 aimed at educating the learners about water resource management. We are instilling good values whilst they are still young in order for them to be good citizens. In turn learners educate their communities and parents. “Educate a child to educate a nation”

Programme director allow me to highlight successes of this programme which made a remarkable impact towards its cause and also contributed to a better life

- We have developed curriculum aligned educational resource materials with information related to water and environment which will be piloted in 300 schools this year;

- Young people are able to identify water related challenges in their communities, conduct comprehensive research on cause of the problem, come up with recommendations and implement their solutions;
- Our children are water wise, you cannot do wrong things in front of them they will correct you;
- We are contributing to skills development as we all know that our country is faced with a challenge of scarce skills, we enhanced interest of young people to water careers, such as scientists, water engineers, geologists etc. We have quite a number of learners enrolled for such fields funded by the Department of Water Affairs. One of the learners who participated in this programme who was a winner of Stockholm Junior Water Prize, Motebele Moshodi from Free State has graduated as an engineer, funded by the Department, he started working for the Department this year as a trainee engineer.
- We have also exposed our young people to international platforms whereby they won international prizes. We won Stockholm Junior Prize twice.
- In 2004, Jacques Decon from Kathu, here in the Northern Cape won the national prize on South African Youth Water Prize project and represented South Africa in Stockholm, Sweden. He did not win but he made his mark. He also got a bursary to study from the Department of Water Affairs.
- In 2007, Reaipela Primary school from Magogong, Northern Cape were national winners of Baswa Le Meetse Project, praise singing category. They won media classroom with 10 computers connected to internet and educational programmes.
- In 2009, Velalanga Primary School in Upington were national winners of Baswa Le Meetse Project, praise singing category. They won media classroom with 20 computers connected to internet and educational programmes.

- In 2009, Isagontle Primary School in Kuruman were national winners of drama category. They won 20 computers connected to internet and educational programmes.

The above successes indicate that we buried Bantu Education, also a testimony that our government can deliver and improve lives of our people. We are here today to honor the learners from Isagontle and Velalanga Primary schools who did put Northern Cape on the Map. They are the ambassadors and future leaders. They are the crème de la crème. They deserve a big hand of applause.

On that note Programme Director, allow me to express my sincere gratitude to our partners:

- MTN for sponsoring five media classrooms to the winning schools. These classrooms will enable these children to access information and conduct research for their school work
- I would also like to acknowledge the support from the Department of Education.

Finally, I would like to hand over the MTN media class room to Isagontle primary school.

I would also like to extend a special vote of thanks to all of you for the efforts and good work done, and to the organisers of this event, the staff of the Department of Water Affairs.

I thank you!