



water affairs

Department:
Water Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

BUDGET VOTE SPEECH FOR THE DEPARTMENTS OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS BY MME REJOICE MABUDAFHASI, MP, THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS, NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PROVINCES (NCOP), PARLIAMENT

06 June 2012

Honourable Chairperson of the National Council of Provinces(NCOP);
Honourable Minister Molewa, MP
Honourable Chairperson of the Select Committee
Honourable Members of the Select Committee
Distinguished Chairpersons and Chief Executives of Public Entities
Distinguished guests
Ladies and gentlemen

INTRODUCTION

Firstly I would like to remind all South Africans that during the month of June we are celebrating both the Environment and Youth. Our Environment theme is *"Green Economy: Does it include You?"*.

The water and environment sectors are faced with several challenges such as environmental degradation, climate change, poor waste management, rhino poaching, communities without access to water, poor water quality, pollution of our rivers, unaccounted for water through water leaks, and climate change amongst others, our programmes and projects are responding to those challenges. I will give a snapshot of some of the programmes I referred to above.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT SUPPORT TO ENSURE ACCESS TO WATER SERVICES, ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT AND WATER CONSERVATION

We are one government thus our collaboration with COGTA, other government departments, water sector partners and private sector. So far we visited some of the 23 priority municipalities and had several consultation meetings with MEC's of Local Government, Executive Mayors and traditional leaders. These meetings are aimed at presenting the situation assessment report for concurrence, getting a better understanding of the water and environment challenges and development of programme of action.

Working together yielded good results: Honourable members let me outline our achievements:

- Through collaboration with the Department of Science and Technology, Amathole and OR Tambo District Municipalities we launched the Accelerating Sustainable Water Services Delivery project which provided water to approximately 9 000 people in Mbelu village.
- Chief Takalani from Mukula village in Limpopo and Chieftainess Mgwebi from Mhlahlane village in Eastern Cape have set a good example of working together to address service delivery issues. They wrote letters to us about the water situation in their communities and guided us in finding solutions. We are proud to announce that the people of Mukula and Mhlahlane are now drinking water as part of our short term intervention whilst we are finalising the long term plan which will be completed before end of this year.
- Through collaboration with KZN provincial government and Umhlathuze Water Board and Umkhanyakude Municipality we provided short term interventions which brought water to communities.
- Most municipalities committed to initiate water conservation programmes to reduce water leaks

These consultation meetings with municipalities created enabled environment for integration of environment into the business of municipalities.

WOMEN DEVELOPMENT

Active participation of women in water and environment resources management is very crucial as women are the custodians since year memorial, thus our commitment to have dedicated programmes for women.

Through adopt a river project aimed at improving the ecosystems of our rivers we have created one thousand and eight (1008) jobs for women and trained them on basic accredited environmental management course. This year we will also identify ninety young women who will be trained on basic water quality testing and we will create enabling environment for them to study further. **They will tell a story which says I started as a river cleaner and now I am a scientist.**

Women in Water Awards have encouraged women to showcase water related projects whereby the national winners are eligible for cash prizes which are used for further development of such projects. Moving forward we will mobilise private sector and other government departments to come on board and support us in realising our vision of developing these women to be SMME's and Co-operatives. We will intensify this programme by ensuring participation by all provinces and municipalities.

Working for Water Programme have created thirteen thousand five hundred and forty one (13,541) jobs for women and provided accredited training and amongst them some have been developed to be contractors.

Women in Environment conference gave women an opportunity to make inputs towards policy development, exhibited their projects and established a national steering committee composed of provincial representatives. This committee is expected to develop a programme of action for further development of these projects.

We are also intensifying our careers outreach programme to schools mobilising our girl children to choose careers in water and environment sectors as a way of addressing the representativity in these two sectors. The sectors are still male dominated.

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Through Environmental programmes created 400 jobs. We will provide support to young people to establish and register a company to provide environmental goods and services.

War on Leaks project continues to reduce unaccounted for water while creating employment and skills development for young people. In Mogale City Municipality, Gauteng Province forty (40) young people were trained on how to fix leaking water taps and toilets, logging, control valve operation and maintenance. This project reached two hundred households and twenty one schools. We are planning to extend this project to Limpopo, North West and Eastern Cape provinces targeting three hundred young people this year.

Our learning academy awarded 494 bursaries over the past 5 years and 82 graduate trainees were appointed in the department

Sebenza Nathi project is a partnership with Rand Water we have trained seventeen unemployed graduates as technicians and they have been placed in Lesedi, Merafong, Emfuleni, Midvaal and Randfontein municipalities in Gauteng. We will extend this project to other provinces this year.

Education and Awareness

The need for vigorous public awareness and education about the importance of water conservation and environmental protection cannot be overemphasized.

Our school based water and environmental education programme implemented in collaboration with the Department of Basic Education have achieved the following:

- Water and environment has been incorporated into the Curriculum Assessment and Policy Statement (CAPS). Through 2020 Vision Programme we reached 1000 schools through South African Youth Water Prize and Baswa Le Meetse Projects. This year we will implement Eco Schools project in seventeen schools (17) which will be a three year programme, it is anticipated that these schools will be model schools in terms of natural resource management.
- The national winners of South African Youth Water Prize project will participate in the Stockholm Junior Water Prize held in Sweden annually. Through our collaboration with Water research Commission and Department of Science and Technology we will patent and further develop the inventions developed by young people and ensure piloting and implementation. We have also awarded bursaries to learners who were the national winners of this project to study for water related careers.

- In partnership with MTN we have provided seven hundred (700) computers to the national winners of the Baswa Le Meetse project

Annually during June Month, we host National Youth Water Summit whereby learners participating in the 2020 Vision programme showcase their water and environment projects, go for excursions to get a better understanding of water resource management, participate in national competitions and get national awards.

This year's summit will be attended by youth led by Ministers from SADC countries plus four countries outside SADC hence it will be called Africa Youth Water Summit. These delegates will present youth programmes implemented from their respective countries and also develop draft Africa youth water strategy to be presented to AMCOW technical committee for approval and implementation.

CONCLUSION

Water and Environment resources are our Treasure, Sources of Life, Catalyst to Economic Development Let us conserve them. Let us declare War on Leaks for Water Conservation.

I thank you