



water affairs

Department:
Water Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

SPEECH BY MS TR MABUDAFHASI, DEPUTY MINISTER OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS DURING THE MEDIA CLASSROOM HANDOVER CEREMOMNY AT MAKWARELA PRIMARY SCHOOL IN SIBABSA, LIMPOPO

02 NOVEMBER 2012

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Cllr Grace Mahosi
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Councillors
Partners
Principals, Educators and Learners
School Governing Body
Members of the media
Ladies and Gentlemen

Ndi Matsheloni

It is great to be part of this august gathering to be amongst the future leaders of our country, our beloved young people. One of the national priorities of our government is education. We are here today to handover a media classroom which I believe is a key to open the gates of wisdom. It is encouraging to see young people making strides towards success.

There is a say which goes like **“Educate a child to educate a Nation”**. Our own liberation icon, the late Olivier Tambo once said **“A nation that does not invest in its youth is not worth its future.”** We continue to draw inspiration from his wisdom.

We are proud of Tshilidzi Phalanndwa, who represented Makwarela Primary School in the Baswa Le Meetse national competition, you have made a mark in your community and the country. We are grateful to the parents and educators for your greatest guidance.

I was so touched by her passion and hard work during her performance on the day of the National

Competition.

Our government created an enabling environment for the development of young people and in this case Tshilidzi and other girls should look up to successful women in our country such as Dr Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma as the first woman to be Chairperson of the African Union Commission.

Learners, I cannot leave this stage without sharing important information with you – Do you know that:

- South Africa is one of the 30 driest countries in the world?
- We are faced with a challenge of limited water resources while the demand of water by domestic, agriculture, industry and mining is increasing rapidly?
- Water is vital to economic and social development?
- If we do not conserve water we will experience water crisis?
- Water is life and without water there is no life?

Given the above challenges, we need to work in tandem and as collective in ensuring that our limited water resources are conserved by protecting our rivers from pollution, declaring war on water leaks, educating our families about water resource management, reporting people violating our water legislations. The conservation of water is everybody's responsibility.

There is a great need to educate our communities about water conservation, we need to change the mindset of believing that we have plenty water, rivers and dams are full, its raining everyday, water is a gift from God. Thus the reason the Department of Water Affairs is implementing a school based education programme called the 2020 Vision which is aimed at educating learners about conservation of water and environment, stimulating their interest in water related careers to address the scarce skills challenge.

Education is the foundation for change, it helps us to learn, stand and walk unassisted. One of the spin-offs of this programme is behavioural change, knowledge about water resource management which enables participation of learners to various action projects of the 2020 Vision programme such as such as Baswa Le Meetse, South African Youth Water Prize, Curriculum Support and Aqua Enduro.

Learners identify water related problems in their communities, come up with solutions to address them. Some of these solutions are presented through competitions whereby winners are eligible for prizes. It is implemented in partnership with Department of Education, MTN, Water Boards and other Government Departments. Without these partners the programme would not have been so successful.

Ladies and gentlemen, we are here today to congratulate Makwarela Primary School which is the 2010 National winner in the Praise Singing Category of Baswa le Meetse competition. Baswa le Meetse is one of the projects of 2020 Vision programme, learners convey educational messages through drama, praise singing, poetry, poster, music. The national winner is eligible for media classroom sponsored by MTN and R6000 cash prize.

Makwarela Primary School competed with eight schools from the nine provinces. I congratulate both learners and educators for your patience during rehearsals and being recognized by the adjudicators as

being one of the best water ambassadors in the country.

This media classroom came at a right time as it will assist the learners and educators to implement the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (Caps). I urge the educators, learners and community to ensure that it doesn't become a "white elephant, and it should be protected against those who are anti-progress, shun and expose those who want to abuse it.

The Department and MTN contribute the centre not only in creating water resource management awareness but to unlock the power of curriculum. The school must not see us as bringing additional responsibilities but contributing to the requirements of the curriculum to make teaching and learning easier using the powerful media forms.

We are investing in the future, we believe that the decisions we take today will have a huge impact for many generations to come.

To all learners, I urge you to work hard so that you amass the skills needed in the water sector. We are in dire need of hydrologist and water scientist to mention a few; we as government are duty-bound to encourage the previously disadvantaged children to take these opportunities seriously. Therefore ensure to fill-in this crucial lacuna (specialised field) and come back to work in the municipalities that are in most cases, lagging behind in service delivery due to this scarcity.

Lack of knowledge on information technology impacts negatively on studies and the results thereof can be seen at tertiary level. Hence the importance of this infrastructure at foundation phase. Our partners in water education heeded the clarion call of government by sponsoring this unit which in a long run shall, I believe take some of us gathered here, to the second economy if and only if we work collectively. Research on educational assignments will be made easy through internet.

The department also hope that this centre will not only strengthen computer literacy expertise but provide equal access and opportunities to students from disadvantaged community with an opportunity to access quality education.

Makwarela Primary school is one of the 135 schools which will participate in the Eco Schools project. The Department and its partners will do its best in providing the required support. Eco Schools project promotes integrated environmental management in schools.

Your participation in the Baswa le Meetse project was an entry to our big church – called Ambassadors of water and environment, if you get in you will never get out. You are expected to bring more members and the target is your families and communities. You will not rest until the entire community join the church and obey the rule of conservation of water and environment.

Our team will regularly interact with the school, educators and the learners to monitor the progress of the learners.

In conclusion I would like to thank all our partners, the Department of Education, MTN, Water Boards and other Government Departments for making this a success.

Success is about hard work and focus, Your bright Future is in your Hands.

Ndo livhuwa (I thank you)