



water affairs

Department:  
Water Affairs  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**Budget Vote Number 38**  
**Address by the Deputy Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs**  
**Ms Rejoice Mabudafhasi, National Assembly**  
**16 May 2012**

Honourable Speaker  
Minister Molewa  
Ministers and Deputy Ministers,  
Honourable Members of the Portfolio Committee  
MEC's, Mayors  
Chairpersons and CEOs of Water Entities and NGO's  
Chiefs and Chieftainess  
Distinguished guests

**INTRODUCTION**

All living organisms need water to survive. It is also the bloodstream of the green economy. It is thus important that we share and use it wisely to benefit both people and the environment.

Chairperson, let me take this opportunity to present our key programmes we implemented during the past fiscal year and give you a snapshot of our plans for this current financial year.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT SUPPORT TO ENSURE ACCESS TO WATER**

Water delivery is everybody's business. The establishment of the Rapid Response Team in each province and our collaboration with Mayors and Chiefs has yielded good results and made a difference. We received several requests for intervention and support from Mayors and Chiefs. We fixed boreholes in Mukula Villages in Limpopo as

a short term intervention, while constructing a reservoir to be completed by October this year.

Our intervention in KwaZulu Natal in partnership with the MEC for Local Government and Umhlathuze Water Board, provided water to the hospitals and communities in Umkhanyakude Municipality. In Mhlahlane village in Eastern Cape we drilled three new boreholes and repaired 1 existing borehole in partnership with Amathole District Municipality, We are exploring options of reticulate water to be closer to communities. I appreciate the co-operation and commitment from the Mayors of Vhembe, Amathole and Umkhanyakude. The leadership and commitment of Chief Takalani, Chief Dumalisile, Chieftainess Mgwebi, Prince Sigcawu and Chairperson of Umhlathuze Water Board, their presence here today is highly appreciated.

We will provide hands on support to the 23 District municipalities identified by Cabinet Lekgotla last year.

## **WOMEN EMPOWERMENT AND DEVELOPMENT**

I want to quote The UN Secretary General Banki Moon who said: “***empowering rural women is one of the smartest investments any country can make towards its development***”. We believe that sustainable water resources management is achieved by full participation of women. It is for that reason that we have the following projects:

### **Adopt a river project**

This project aims to protect our rivers from pollution that threatens the river health. We created one thousand and eight (1008) jobs for women and trained them on basic accredited environmental management course.

This year we aim to train ninety young women on basic water quality testing who will be twinned with our officials responsible for River Health. This initiative will encourage these young women to register for advanced courses in water quality management. We will give them bursaries. They will tell a story which says – I started as a river cleaner and now I am a scientist.

### **Women in Water Awards**

This project strengthens active participation of rural women in water resource management. Women identify water related challenges in their communities and conceptualise ideas to implement them. They are registered for women in water

awards. The national winners receive cash prizes which are used for further project development and implementation. Three hundred and nine households benefitted from this project. Twenty women headed households which includes girl children headed households from Mbangwane Village in Mpumalanga province were provided with rain water harvesting tanks. **Malibongwe!!**

## **YOUTH DEVELOPMENT**

We are implementing the following youth development projects which address the scarce skills challenge exacerbated by the ageing work force and enabling youth participation in the economy.

### **War on Leaks project**

The War on Leaks project is aimed at reducing unaccounted for water through leaks whilst creating jobs and skills development. It is aligned to the goal of reducing by half water loss by the year 2014.

This project saved six thousand three hundred and ninety three kilolitres in Mogale City in Gauteng province. Forty young people were trained on how to fix leaking water taps and toilets, logging, control valve operation and maintenance. This project covered two hundred households and twenty one schools.

Twenty nine unemployed youth recruited by Lesedi Local Municipality implemented this project. One thousand two hundred and thirty (1230) houses and six (6) schools were audited for leaks. Four Hundred and Ninety Five (495) households were retrofitted. This year we will extend the project to Limpopo, North West and Eastern Cape provinces targeting three hundred young people.

### **Sebenza Nathi**

Sebenza Nathi project is a partnership project with Rand Water aimed at training unemployed graduates in order to address the scarce skills challenge in the water sector. Through this project we trained seventeen unemployed graduates as technicians

who were placed in Lesedi, Merafong, Emfuleni, Midvaal and Randfontein municipalities.

Through our learning academy we awarded 494 bursaries over the past five years and eighty two graduate trainees were appointed in the department.

## **PUBLIC AWARENESS AND EDUCATION**

Our public awareness and education is implemented through school based and community outreach programmes:

### **2020 Vision programme**

This programme educates grades R to12 learners about integrated water resource management, climate change and environment including water related careers.

Annually our youth participate in the Stockholm Junior Water prize during Stockholm World Water Week.

In partnership with the Water Research Commission and Department of Science and technology we are determined to do patentship and piloting of these projects.

Seven hundred computers sponsored by MTN have been provided to schools which were national winners of the Baswa Le Meetse Award.

Annually we host youth water summit whereby learners present their action projects, go for excursions to Rand Water and Roodeplaat Dam, do public speaking and debate on selected topics and participate in national competitions.

During Stockholm World Water Week, African Water Ministers resolved that the schools programme be extended to all African Youth. This will give them opportunity to participate in our annual Youth Water Summit. This year SADC youth will present their programmes and also develop a SADC draft youth water strategy.

### **Community Based Education programme**

Through our Blue Bus road shows under the theme “Be Water Wise” we reach many communities. The bus travels throughout the country targeting municipalities with high rate of water leaks educating them about Water Conservation through pamphlets, engagements with communities and industrial theatre. We thank and acknowledge our celebrities who pledged to be Water Ambassadors.

Water conservation awards are also presented to municipalities, industries, mining, water boards and individuals recognising their efforts towards water conservation and demand management.

## **RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

Through our rural development programme three thousand one hundred (3100) farmers were issued with water licenses, rehabilitated and upgraded infrastructure, operation and maintenance subsidies, rainwater tanks and bulk pipelines/infrastructure. Fourteen thousand seven hundred and sixty eight (14768) rain water harvesting tanks were provided.

## **COMPLIANCE MONITORING AND ENFORCEMENT**

Our Compliance Monitoring and Enforcement unit also known as the “Blue Scorpions”, managed to reduce the unlawful usage of water, dumping of agricultural waste, industrial, sewerage, abattoir waste along the rivers to mention but a few. In the Vaal river system we ensured drastic reduction in unlawful activities and loss of revenue to the Department. The physical volume that was stopped amounts to 16.6 million cubic metres per annum.

Eighty six (86) Mines were audited, six (6) Mining operations were stopped for operating without water licenses and five (5) criminal charges were laid.

## **MILITARY VETERANS PROJECT**

In collaboration with the Department of Military veterans we are implementing military veterans projects that include rehabilitating canals, clearing invasive alien species,

creating secondary industries and skills development. 750 jobs will be created through these projects.

## **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, I wish to thank our honourable Minister for her guidance, the honourable chairperson and members of the portfolio committee for their continued support.

I want to thank the director general and his team and our ministry staff for their unwavering support and commitment.

I also want to thank all stakeholders and NGO's from the water sector for their continuous commitment to serve our communities.

I thank you.