



water affairs

Department:
Water Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

SPEECH DELIVERED BY HONOURABLE DEPUTY MINISTER OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS, MS REJOICE MABUDAFHASI DURING THE HANDOVER OF THE MEDIA CLASSROOM TO HIBERNIA PRIMARY SCHOOL IN GEORGE, WESTERN CAPE

19 MARCH 2013

Programme Director;

Your Worship Executive Mayor of Eden District Municipality, Cllr Van der Huisthuizen;

Your Worship Mayor of George Local Municipality, Cllr Charles Stander;

Councillors;

Director General, Department of Education

CEO: Breede-Overberg, Mr Phakamani Buthelezi;

General Manager MTN Foundation, Mr Kusile Senior Manager MTN Education
Portfolio, Mr Eric Matsomane;

All Government officials;

Members of the School Governing Body;

Principal, educators and learners;

Members of the media;

Distinguished guests;

Ladies and gentlemen

I am glad to be part of this august event of the official handing over of the media classroom.

This event takes place on the eve of Human Rights Day and World Water Day. Water is a Human Right. It is enshrined in our Constitution that everyone has the right to have access to clean water.

The United Nations General Assembly declared 2013 as the year of International Water Cooperation.

The Media Classroom hand-over forms part of the National Water Week activities under the theme ***Water is life, Conserve it, Respect it and Enjoy it.***

The aim of the National Water Week campaign is to raise awareness among South Africans about the role of water in socio-economic development including the need to get all South Africans to use water more responsibly.

It is for this reason that Government calls on each South African and on all stakeholders to work together to conserve water.

In his State of the Nation Address, President Zuma reminded us that:

I quote

“All successful societies have one thing in common – they invested in education”

Unquote

In 2011 Hibernia Primary School represented by Gaillin Muller, Zinay Fry, Kelly-Ann De Koker, put George on the national map when they emerged victorious at the Baswa Le Meetse (BLM) competitions in the Poetry category during the annual South African Youth Water Summit.

Ladies and gentlemen, we are here today to congratulate Hibernia Primary School which is the national winner of the state of the art media classroom sponsored by MTN, equipped with 21 computers and an inter-active board and R6000 cash prize.

We would like to thank the principal, educators and the school governing body for the commitment, support and encouragement that you gave to these children to participate in our educational programme.

Baswa Le Meetse is one of the projects of the 2020 Vision Programme aimed at educating learners about water resource management and promotion of water sector careers to address the scarce skills challenge.

Learners convey educational messages through drama, praise singing, poetry, poster and music Through this programme learners will be able to transfer the knowledge and skills to their families and communities and ultimately efficient use and protection of natural resource will be instilled and also that learners will choose water sector careers.

Other projects of the 2020 Vision Programme include the 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. Learners are the best educators and they are able to change the mindset of their families and the entire community.

Through this programme we have:

- Reached 10000 schools nationally;
- Won the Stockholm Junior Water Prize twice;
- Provided 40 media classrooms;
- Provided bursaries to deserving learners;
- Exposed learners to national and international platforms;
- Provided curriculum aligned educational resource materials related to water and environment and climate change.

There is a need for review of this programme to ensure that it makes impact in terms of sustainability. I am proud to inform you that we are negotiating partnership with WESSA on the Eco Schools project. Eco schools will enable us to achieve water and

environmental sustainability in schools and their surrounding communities as well as supporting Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in the national curriculum.

Hibernia will be one of the schools that will partake in the Eco Schools as we want it to be a model school in water and environmental management, learners and educators of this school are Ambassadors of Water and Environment. The Department, Municipalities and our partners will provide ongoing support on the Eco Schools project. In two years time we will visit this school to monitor progress.

Ladies and Gentleman I will not be doing justice if I don't mention the role of MTN in this initiative. They sponsored the media classroom and in the process have heeded the call made by the honourable President of the Republic of South Africa, Jacob Zuma that private sector have a responsibility to partner with government to solve challenges faced by our society. You have supported the notion that government cannot do it alone.

Finally, I would like to thank all our partners, the Department of Education, MTN, Water Boards, Eden District Municipality and George Local Municipality, for making this a success.

Water is precious – Save it!!

I thank you.