



water affairs

Department:
Water Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

SPEECH DELIVERED BY THE HONOURABLE DEPUTY MINISTER OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS, MS REJOICE MABUDAFHASI ON THE OCCASION OF THE HANDING OVER OF THE MEDIA CLASSROOM TO KWA-MSIKWA SECONDARY SCHOOL IN LUSIKISIKI, EASTERN CAPE

25 MARCH 2013

Programme director;

Mayor of Port St John's Local Municipality: Cllr Mangqo;

Chief Nguboyesizwe Sigcau

Traditional leaders

General Manager of MTN Foundation: Kusile Mtunzi Hairwadzi;

School governing body;

Principal, Educators and Learners

Distinguished guests;

Members of the media;

Ladies and gentlemen

Good afternoon

A conservationist and a naturalist, John Muir, in 1911, observed that, "when we try to, pick out anything by itself in nature, we find it hitched to everything else in the

Universe” one can safely say that all beings, organisms and phenomenon’s are attached to one universal risk, water and not just any water fresh water!

March has been declared a Water Month, we decided that Lusikisiki will be one of the areas to celebrate this important month. During Water Month we educate communities about water conservation, celebrate achievements, engage communities to get a better understanding of water related challenges.

Zinkokheli zoluntu, you have been chosen by the Mighty One to lead our people who some of them had abandoned ubuntu babo and resorted to be careless about fauna and flora. I humbly request you to be guardians and ambassadors of our water and environment. In the community gatherings you need to remind our people that Water is a scarce, fragile and important commodity that links together the web of food and economic growth for decades to come. Its conservation is not a Choice but a Must.

Program director our investment in water and environmental education is bearing fruits slowly in South Africa. Information about water and environment has been disseminated to more than 10000 Learners from the schools participated in our 2020 vision programme. 300 learners benefited from our bursary, three of them graduated as engineers. Claire Reid who won the Stockholm Junior Water Prize is implementing her project called Reel Gardening and she employed 10 women. Her project is one of the projects contributing to poverty eradication.

This programme elevated us to be a leading country in Africa on the involvement of youth in the management of water resources. We have been tasked to lead the development of Africa youth water strategy and implementation plan within the auspices of African Ministers Council of Water (AMCOW). We have also been requested to share information with our sister countries about our 2020 vision programme.

Programme Director we are here today to celebrate the achievement of Kwa-Msikwa Secondary School who won the national prize of Baswa Le Meetse, poetry category in 2012. Congratulations to Mihla Mthwesi and Sive Duku for putting Lusikisiki on the national map when they emerged victorious during the annual South African Youth Water Summit

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. 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.

Baswa Le Meetse was initiated in 1996 and fully implemented to all nine provinces. This was the brainchild and legacy programme of the former Minister of Water Affairs, the late Professor Kader Asmal.

Our pioneer and the others, whom I've mentioned earlier on, saw the importance of utilising this school-based lacuna and ambassadors being learners to drive this vital awareness message to families and communities. I'm rest assured that this program has and is still bearing fruits.

Our government is very proud of your achievement Kwa-Msikwa Secondary and the support rendered by the community. This school will be one of the schools targeted for eco schools project as from 2014-2016. The Department and WESSA will provide ongoing support. We need eco-schools practices so as to create awareness and action around environmental sustainability in schools and communities as well as supporting Education for Sustainable Development in the national curriculum. After 3 years this school will be a model school which will be managing their water efficiently, managing waste, food garden, improved pass rate as they have this media classroom etc.

*Program Director MTN has heeded the call made by the Honourable President of the Republic Of South Africa, Jacob Zuma that organisations have partnership role to play with government, in resolving challenges faced by society. You have supported the notion that government can indeed not do it alone. I'm short of words in thanking you for this state of art media classroom which has 21 computers and an interactive board, **ndiyabulela kakhulu!***

In conclusion allow me to make an appeal to this community - Abuse of women and children should be abhorred at all cost, and it is un-African, perpetrators of these atrocities need to be named and shamed

*To my beloved communities, I plead with you to be watch-dogs of this beautiful initiative, let us not allow criminals to have their way into this centre. The school must also take a leading role in ensuring that this doesn't become a white elephant, we will be monitoring the improvement brought about by this centre. Whether new researches have been sought using this centre to bring change and betterment of this society as a whole, **Sisonke kulento!***

Finally, I would like to thank all our partners, the Department of Education, Municipalities, MTN, Water Boards, Lusikisiki community, abavikeli bethu (SAPS) and traffic services. You make us hold our heads High!

Uthixo abe nani nonke.

ENQUIRIES:

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