



water affairs

Department:
Water Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

SPEECH DELIVERED BY THE HONOURABLE DEPUTY MINISTER OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS, MS REJOICE MABUDAFHASI, MP, DURING THE HANDOVER OF THE MEDIA CLASSROOM TO MORUTSI PRIMARY SCHOOL AT MORUTSI VILLAGE, GREATER TZANEEN LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, LIMPOPO.

04 APRIL 2014.

Programme Director;

Your Worship the Mayor of Greater Tzaneen Local Municipality, Cllr Dikeledi Mmetle;

Councillors;

Kgosi Modjadji;

Representative from the Department of Basic Education;

Representative from MTN Foundation;

School governing body

Principals, Educators and Learners;

Distinguished Guests;

Members of the media;

Ladies and gentlemen

Thobela.

As we celebrate the 20 years of freedom and democracy, water still remains a key commodity for

social and economic upliftment especially for those who were previously excluded in the mainstream economy.

Our Democratic Constitution in its bill of rights guarantees the right of access to clean drinking water to all citizens.

This is a major milestone as it opens up the possibility for everyone to challenge the state to provide water.

This right mandates us to manage our water resources effectively. Be it ground water, dams, rivers, reservoirs, wetlands, streams, etc.

As the Department we have taken up this challenge with zeal and enthusiasm and have pledged not renege on this crucial commitment.

Since 1994 we have increased access to clean drinking water from 59% to 95.2%. We are destined to do more and to live up to a good story that was started by the forbearers of our democracy.

Our accelerated growth resource development programme which has included the building of major dams like De Hoop in Sekhukhune District , Spring Groove in KZN and Berg River in Western Cape as well as many other initiatives to enhance our water storage capacity attest to the resolutions of our democratic government to meet the social and economic needs of our people.

Whilst we push our mandate we also support the government in its top priority.

We believe that for us to continue to tell a good story we need to work together with the private sector to change the lives of our people for the better.

We are coming to you as government and business (Water Affairs and MTN) a proud sponsor of Baswa Le Meetse Project to emphasise the importance of saving water and to advocate the importance of education.

Baswa Le Meetse (Youth in Water) 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 project the grade 6 learners convey health and hygiene messages through arts medium such as drama, music, poetry, praise singing and posters.

One of the greatest sons of Africa Nelson Mandela once said,

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world”.

Ladies and Gentleman this media classroom is much evidence to the Department of Basic Education and the community of Morutsi that we will continue to enhance the implementation of Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) for the proper teaching and learning which is required by functional schooling such as this one.

As the Department of Water Affairs we provide all our water ambassadors with enabling environment for both teaching and learning. Even the best teachers will find it difficult to do the best job if the schools do not have access to modern technology.

We are also looking at other areas that will contribute to the whole school development by helping mobilising partners to address the challenges that beset our schools. This is done through our ECO Schools Project which focuses on access, water quality, water quantity, sanitation health & hygiene, greening and climate change.

As a result the educator who was in the forefront in nestling these kids from the district to the national adjudication and winning this prize Ms Ramawela is not unnoticed.

The Department will once more at our cost take Ms Ramawela in June to the 2014 Youth Water Summit for her to be trained in Fundisa for Change and ECO Schools project facilitated by Rhodes University and WESSA.

We believe that this kind of training will help to empower the teacher to raise Morutsi Primary School into a true water ambassador institution.

May the names of the learners who made us to be here today be forever written in the history books of Morutsi Primary School for their sterling efforts in representing this community and bringing home a prize that will do good to the generations to come.

The learners I am referring to are: Mokwena Lonia , Mokwena Lonet, Sabashe Surprise, Mohale Stella, Makhela Pretty, Lesikwa Gloria, Selepe Kholofelo, Motsoe Sello, Lebephe Mokgadi and Seisie Hazel.

The great work and contribution of these kids towards changing the lives of our community for the better must not be forgotten.

Indeed, through their contribution the people of Morutsi village must proudly say that South Africa is a better country to live in now, than it was twenty years back.

As we are approaching the third decade of freedom in South Africa and while the majority of our people appreciate the work we have done in the past 20 years to lift them out of dehumanisation and indignity, poverty remains a bigger development challenge ahead of us.

One of the challenges is to educate our communities to protect and respect the community assets such as schools and libraries as these are the reservoirs of wealth for the generations to come.

In the same vain lets all have the same opinion that water is a catalyst to social and economic development and will remain the most critical resource and enabler of our growth as a country and society.

It gives me great pleasure to officially hand over the media classroom to Morutsi Primary School for winning the first prize in the Baswa le Meetse, Drama category.

Morutsi Primary School received a R6000 cash prize and the media classroom sponsored by our partner MTN Foundation comprised of the following: an interactive white board, 21 computers, 1 multipurpose printer, data projector, internet service (sponsored for 12months).

In conclusion, I would like to thank all our partners the Department of Basic Education, Mopani District and Greater Tzaneen Local Municipalities, MTN Foundation, Lepelle Water Board and SAPS for ensuring that this event is a success.

As we are approaching Easter I want to refer you to Proverbs: 13 verse 9:

“The light of righteousness shines brightly”.

You can be a source of light and hope. Your little light can shine brightly. No amount of darkness can snuff out the light of a single candle. So shine on and bring light into the world around you.

Let me remind you that Water is life. The little water that we have should be Conserved, Respected, Shared and Enjoyed by present and future generations in our country.

I thank you.