



water affairs

Department:
Water Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

SPEECH BY THE HONOURABLE DEPUTY MINISTER OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS, MS. REJOICE MABUDAFHASI, MP, ON THE OCCASION OF THE JANSENVILLE INTERVENTION WATER PROJECT HANDOVER IN IKWEZI LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, EASTERN CAPE

20 March 2014

Programme Director

Your Worship the Executive Mayor of Cacadu District Municipality, Cllr Khunjuzwa Kekana;

Your Worship the Mayor of Ikwezi Local Municipality, Cllr Sizwe Mngwevu;

Councillors;

Eastern Cape Water Affairs Head, Chief Director, Portia Makhanya;

Government officials;

Distinguished guests;

Community members;

Members of the Media;

Ladies and Gentlemen

Molweni.

We have brought the good story to Jansenville.

South Africans both young and old are celebrating National Water Week from 17 to 23 March under the theme *“Celebrating 20 years of Water delivery for social and economic development”*.

The National Water Week aims to create a culture of water conservation for all South African consumers and users; support water management and water services institutions to implement water conservation; contribute to the protection of the environment, ecology and water resources and to increase awareness of Government's efforts towards realising the constitutional right of all South Africans to have access to clean water and sanitation.

Government has made many strides in the past twenty years in delivering water to the majority of our people and we acknowledge the fact that more still needs to be done.

South Africa is a water scarce country and ranks amongst the 30 driest countries in the world. The little water that we have should be Conserved, Respected, Shared and Enjoyed by present and future generations in our country.

We are here in Ikwezi Local Municipality just on the eve of Human Rights Day to talk about one of the fundamental Human Rights as enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic. Water is life. Everyone has the right to have access to clean drinking water.

During my last visit here I left very worried about the plight of water in this area which was a hindrance to development in Ikwezi Local Municipality. Indeed water is life and it is a catalyst to development.

The Mayor told me that this problem prevailed for many years and amongst others, the rate of unemployment is very high in this area. I told him that we will make a plan to address this problem as I believe that there is no problem without a solution.

I would like to commend and appreciate the community for being so patient inspite of the hardships they have experienced, they remained hopeful and they never engaged in violent protests and vandalised the properties, instead they utilised the available and acceptable channels to address the issue with government.

Programme Director, allow me to take this opportunity to officially hand over the Jansenville Intervention Water Project which amounted to R5,8 million.

This intervention project manifests a result of the collaboration between the Department of Water Affairs, Cacadu District and Ikwezi Local municipalities.

The Ikwezi Local Municipality is situated in a water scarce area and has a challenge of poor quality ground water. The water becomes depleted in the drought periods in Karoo cluster and this also affects Ikwezi Local Municipality.

The samples taken by the Department of Water Affairs on Jansenville's boreholes indicated that the quality of borehole water supplying Jansenville was so poor that it may have led to real and significant risk to public health. The high sulphur content in the water caused rotten egg smell.

We improved the water quality, reduced water loss through war on leaks project, operations and maintenance, training and capacity building.

I am proud to announce that the water problem in this area is a thing of the past, together we have solved that problem and the people of Jansenville are now drinking clean water.

The Green Drop status improved from 2,9% to 60%. It is indeed a good story to tell.

In a bid to provide long term solution to the water challenges in this area, the Department of Water Affairs has budgeted an amount of R2million for a feasibility study to determine actions required for a long term water supply solution for the people of Ikwezi Local municipality. This high level feasibility study is nearing its completion.

Last year Jansenville managed to host a very successful International Mohair Summit with delegates from all over the world as a result of this intervention. People can testify that government improved their lives for the better.

I am appealing to each and every member of this community to be Water Ambassadors who will ensure that water is conserved, guard against vandalism of water infrastructure and all other government assets.

In conclusion, I would like to express my gratitude to the Mayors of both the Cacadu District and Ikwezi Local municipalities for the cooperation and commitment on this project.

Secondly, the hard work of all officials who made sure that we deliver on our mandate. I know that it was not easy but you have made it. I am proud of you.

Indeed, this is a testimony that working together we can change many lives for the better.

I thank you.