



**water & sanitation**

Department:  
Water and Sanitation  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**ADDRESS BY Ms. NOMVULA MOKONYANE, MINISTER OF WATER AND SANITATION AT THE WOMEN OF WATER AND SANITATION (WOWS) WORKSHOP, HELD AT EMPEROR'S PALACE, EKURHULENI, GAUTENG.**

**18 AUGUST 2017,**

## **SPEAKER'S NOTES:**

Programme Director,

Cllr Tiisetso Nketle, Ekurhuleni MMC for Water, Sanitation and Energy,

Representatives of Community-based Organisations and Non-Governmental Organisations,

Representatives from Business sector,

SALGA Representatives,

Government Officials,

Invited Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen

Good Morning.

- I welcome you all to this consultation workshop aptly titled **“WOMEN IN WATER AND SANITATION (WOWS) ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATIONAL WATER AND SANITATION MASTER PLAN (NW&SMP).**

- It is indeed a **WOWS** workshop, being held as it is in the month of August when we celebrate National Women's Day on 09<sup>th</sup> August 2017; the month in which we recognise and celebrate the struggles, achievements and contributions of women in and to everything that is South Africa.
- I am so pleased that you accepted the invitation and have responded as positively as evidenced by your attendance at this WOWS workshop. Thank you for taking the time out of your busy schedules to come and build the water and sanitation master plan with us. It underlines the importance which you as women, and indeed, the men of South Africa, accord to water and sanitation issues
- For brevity, hence forth, I shall be referring to the **NATIONAL WATER AND SANITATION MASTER PLAN** as the Master Plan.
- The Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) embarked on, and is leading the initiative to develop the Master Plan, which is a plan intended to guide the water sector with investment planning for the development of water resources and the delivery of water and sanitation services over a ten year horizon to 2030, and even beyond, as some themes of water and sanitation like water resource planning. This development is a first for South Africa, and we must applaud ourselves and for having finally taken this important step.
- The Master Plan is the plan that identifies key actions in the water sector and allocates roles and responsibilities to all of us in the water

sector, from the various tiers of government, the private sector and other stakeholders for the implementation of the plan.

- It will include a list of key programmes, projects and actions to be implemented for the protection and development of the national water resources, and for the provision of adequate and reliable water and sanitation services for all citizens. It will also address the enabling requirements, such as the institutional and legal arrangements for implementation, operation and maintenance, funding requirements and models, and monitoring and evaluation models.
- The work to develop the Master Plan has already commenced. A total of 11 consultation workshops have been held as part of the stakeholder consultations. These consultations include the national dialogue on the Master Plan to sensitise South Africa on the development of the master plan, which was held on the 19 May 2017, and chaired by the Deputy Minister of Water and Sanitation, Pam Tshwete. The other consultations were the workshops held in the nine provinces.
- I am informed that these workshops were attended by a very wide variety of stakeholders representing the major players in the water sector in our country including government, catchment management agencies, district and local municipalities, water users association, education and research institutions and other not for profit organisations. The valued inputs received have informed the current drafts of the master plan.

- It is very vital that the Master Plan is developed collectively by all key role players and service delivery authorities in the water and sanitation sectors, and that it enjoys their full support, acceptance and agreement. This workshop for us as women helps in achieving this objective. I trust and believe you will provide inputs that will help to direct and drive our vision of managing water and sanitation in the country in a sustainable manner.
- By coming together here to input into the master plan, we recognise that unless we are able to work together as a team where we combine our core competencies, we will always perform at the average level, because none of us can ever be best at everything. We want excellence, and by playing to our different strengths in the water sector, I do believe and am convinced that we can achieve excellent outputs. That is what is called collaboration, resulting in **Aristotle's** oft quoted saying "***The whole is greater than the sum of its parts.***" Our whole we intend to achieve is a holistic master plan, and its final outlook will be much greater than the sum of our individual inputs.
- Despite many laudable initiatives and considerable financial investments since 1994, which have seen equitable access to water improve considerably, there is still significant outstanding work to be undertaken to adequately address the country's water supply and sanitation backlogs. I do not wish to bore you with statistics, but indeed, you are aware that the backlogs exist in many places in our country; places that women have to walk long distances to get water, places where we are still using buckets for sanitation; places where we are short of food because of lack of access to water. This cannot

be in a democratic South Africa. And it is up to us as women in water to put a stop to this, to improve things for future generations.

- Within the framework of the water security initiative, our Cabinet identified the need to develop a comprehensive integrated master plan, which will incorporate and coordinate relevant water sector plans available from the many, sources and initiatives. The core purpose of the Master Plan is to provide an overall perspective of the scope of the water and sanitation business, to estimate the investments required to ensure effective water resources, and water and sanitation services delivery, as well as to facilitate effective integrated investment planning, implementation of actions and evaluation of achievements.
- As we settle down to reflect on and discuss the water and sanitation situation in South Africa, I am aware and would hope that you can also agree that there are so many concerns around water and sanitation that are ever tugging at our consciences, ever present and overriding to and over us, at the tops of mind. It is by no means a matter of word play or coincidence that other greater minds have coined the phrase “**Water is life, Sanitation is dignity**”. For indeed, water and sanitation can be a matter of life and death.
- And if we do nothing about these pertinent issues tugging at our consciences, we will forever be crying a line from that stanza from Whispers in the Deep, the song by the late **Ray Phiri of Stimela** fame, and I quote “***we are tributaries of that great river of pain***”. It will be the pain of lack of **water security**, the pain of **inequity in access to water**, the pain of the lack of access to **dignified**

**sanitation**, and the pain of poor water service delivery because of **lack of funding, poor governance and inappropriate institutional frameworks**.

- The issue of **water security** for South Africa not only circumscribes the entire water sector, but also has far reaching consequences across the entire economy of South Africa. It touches on growth and development of all sectors of our economy. I am aware that there is the initiative called the National Integrated Water Security Framework, which is driven by the National Planning Commission (NDP).
- This is in recognition of the importance of water security for in our country. In the context of the Master Plan, **water security** touches on many facets, including identifying future water sources for our growing population and the attendant future water resources development options, the operation and maintenance of water and sanitation infrastructure, the proper management of our water quality, Water Supply Services, Resilience of our country to Climate Change Impacts and Water Conservation and Water Demand Management.
- Furthermore, we can move on down the stream to **equitable access to water**, and here in realisation of our dreams, we think of such challenges as water allocation, the water, energy & food nexus, access to water for vulnerable groups and of course water and health as an outcome. Importantly, I would like us, as we provide inputs into the Master Plan to think of some key issues, like the per capita water use in the country. Is it sustainable? What about the water supply Level of Service? Do we still continue to talk of 25 litres per capita per

day? There are implications of each of the decisions we input into the Master Plan today, and we have to seriously focus on these implications. Funding, governance of the water sector, the requisite skills and the role of women.

- Even if we have access to the water as I have alluded to above, does this result in **dignified Sanitation Service**, which is a right for every person living in South Africa? We still see areas that do not have adequate coverage of appropriate sanitation services. Further, I am concerned about the pervasive negative attitude towards innovation and appropriate technology for sanitation, especially in a water scarce country like South Africa.
- I ask questions of you as participants and players providing inputs into the Master Plan. Do we have an understanding of the distinctions between rural and urban sanitation? Is the VIP toilet the level sanitation we aspire to? What game changers can we bring on board to guide this Master Plan in this regard? What can we do at a local level? In our schools, churches and hospitals? It is my firm believe that there are many innovations that can come from all of us that can assist in reducing the gaps prevalent in our society.
- A key challenge to all which has somehow hampered our capacity to deliver is the issues around Institutional and Funding Arrangements for Water & Sanitation. Such issues touch on policies and legislation and Strategies, the institutional arrangements, and funding and financing options for water. Amongst you are some of the experts in this regard. Let us work to form partnerships to input into the master plan. Local Management and Stakeholder Participation, cost recovery

as well as Water and Sanitation Governance are important considerations.

- I have no doubt that as we discuss, we will be able to add flesh to these key issues or themes I have outlined above and input into a collective and sustainable Master Plan that we can all own, identify with, and therefore use as a blue print for future development of Water and Sanitation in the country.
- I would also like to see each and every South African, at the village, in the local municipality, in the district and in the province seeing and identifying themselves with this Master Plan. Not only must they see themselves, they must hear, and at the same time feel it. For without hearing each other, seeing our future, and feeling what our fellow brothers, sisters, fathers and mothers are experiencing, we are not touching each other in a positive way.
- With these words, I once again welcome you all and request for your valued inputs into the Master Plan as women. Trace the path of water, from the resource addressing water security, to use of that water, the sanitation and finally the enabling environment. Let us **WOW** each other in a positive, hearing and feeling vision of South Africa.

Dankie

Ngiyabonga