



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MINISTER MOKONYANE

KEYNOTE ADDRESS AT THE OPENING PLENARY:

Speaking Notes: 4th International Faecal Sludge Management
Conference (FSM4)

Hosted by the Gates Foundation, Chennai, India

Monday 20 February 2017, Venue: Plenary

Moderator

The leadership from both the Union Government of India and the State government
of Tamil Nadu

Leaders of various Institutions engaged in the FSM promotion

Researchers, Scientists, and Innovators

Our counterparts in the Water and Sanitation fraternity

Students/youth/CBOs

Members of the media

Distinguished guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

It is a privilege and honour for me to have been invited to present at FSM4.
Sanitation is a topic that is very close to my heart. I also feel privileged since I am
aware that this subject has been a focus and priority in my country. This event has

grown, with over 1200 people attending this event this year, acknowledging the importance of sanitation as key global development priority.

I congratulate the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and all the partners for this great success.

I want to say upfront, in my conversations with my colleague Ministers in charge of Water and Sanitation globally, we recognise that the pathway to global prosperity must be built on the foundation of ensuring access to basic needs for all the world's population. A very important component is the goal for improved, safe sanitation that expand the frontiers of dignity for our people. I can also tell you that Africa stands ready to catalyse the global Sanitation Revolution, together with our partners in Asia and the world.

We have been hugely encouraged by the successes of the Sanitation Research for Africa (SRFA) project generously funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates foundation and led by the Water Research Commission of my country. In the SRFA, we have demonstrated very successfully, new innovative sanitation solutions and implementation models in eleven Southern African countries, many of whom are represented here today. Jambo to my African colleague delegates. As a community of practice, we stand ready to move into the next steps of scale-up for widespread coverage as we endeavour to meet the ambitious and necessary SDG for universal access to safe and sustainable sanitation.

We recognise that "New Sanitation" holds the promise of simultaneously meeting our sanitation goals while increasing of water security status with lower energy use and successfully bringing down our carbon footprint.

Conference Chair, Colleagues, let me humbly offer on behalf of my Africa colleagues, that we stand ready to host FSM5, in 2019, in the beautiful continent of Africa.

Let me now offer a few remarks about my own country. We have made significant progress with sanitation, achieving and surpassing the MDGs target set for **2015 with nearly 80%** of South Africa's population connected to safe and dignified sanitation. However the country is still experiencing challenges that emanates from the moving targets and the fast growing cities, with a significant portion of the population yet to be serviced. **Our ambition as a Government is to achieve universal coverage far before the 2030 SDG target date, in a manner that also encourages and assists our developing world partners.**

The SA Water Research Commission (WRC), and the Ministry of Science and Technology in partnership with the CSIR, the universities and many private sector players are assisting hugely in this regard. South Africa's Water and Sanitation sector still owe its progress to the history and dichotomy, which remains a contributor to the element of inequity which will face off tremendously with the universal access to water and sanitation services. Those who are poor and previously marginalised by apartheid have huge expectations for higher levels of services, and for sanitation this relates to conventional water borne sanitation. We are all aware of the user and health benefits of conventional waterborne sanitation; however we are also aware of the challenge that comes with its management and resource requirements.

In 2015, at the National Sanitation Indaba, I launched a nationwide campaign under the theme **"It's not all about flushing"**, to create an understanding that the future around flushing **exposes us to rigidity and leaves us vulnerable**. This clarion call was also to influence paradigm and practice for new and novel solutions to this very water hungry Victorian solution, both within practice and policy. We have incorporated these aspects in our new national policy. We are committed to "reinventing the Toilet" as a national priority.

In South Africa the racial legacy of apartheid — and the acknowledged role of services in redressing it — has dramatically amplified the situation: **the more sanitation is treated as an index of equality, the greater the sensitivity of residents to double or triple standards of provision.** As the toilet wars showed, the issue is not only whether or not sanitation is provided; the debate also hinges on the standard of that provision. Two distinctive features of the South African water sector are the policy of free basic water and the existence of water boards, which are bulk water supply agencies that operate pipelines and sell water from reservoirs to municipalities.

In May 2014 it was announced that one of our Municipalities, eThekweni won the **Stockholm Industry Water Award** "for its transformative and inclusive approach", calling it "one of the most progressive utilities in the world". The city has connected 1.3 million additional people to piped water and provided 700,000 people with access to toilets in 14 years. It also was South Africa's first municipality to put free basic water for the poor into practice. Furthermore, it has promoted rainwater harvesting, mini hydropower and urine-diverting dry toilets.

eThekweni Water and Sanitation, the unit that delivers Durban's water and sanitation services, has gained international recognition for its progressive approach. The eThekweni Water's ambitious **rollout of 90,000 UD** toilets in the rural and peri-urban areas beyond its sewage system — seemed especially pertinent, given global concerns about water scarcity. In line with national policies, eThekweni municipality has pledged, and more critically eThekweni Water is now delivering on the pledge, to provide basic water and sanitation to all in its jurisdiction.

While the flush toilet is considered as the "gold standard", we have to accept that it is out-dated and desperately in need of competition. One of the reasons why the flush

toilet has become the goal standard is that it has a water seal – which limits odours – and offers the convenience of removing faecal waste away from the home. However, currently water in South Africa’s case, perfectly drinkable water is flushed away using this conventional skewed approach. So we are currently looking into the alternative methods as it is clear that we cannot continue on this path, and then use large resources in the form of water and energy to deal with this problem, which is actually a resource. Let us look at sanitation as a **resource** and change these approaches and wicked problems it creates.

There is need to develop a sanitation infrastructure that is effective and demonstrates less dependence on water while promoting its re-use. **I acknowledge and recognise the novel efforts by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation through its Sanitation Grand challenge**, to move to a point of establishing sanitation technology which goes off-the-grid. This is aligned to my vision and we are having a close working relationship with the Foundation to fast-track these solutions into our environment.

Our demand for such solutions is desperate and I believe that our challenges in South Africa and the developing world can only be achieved through the introduction and the use of innovative and technological advances that brings about benefits at every step of the sanitation value chain. We need radical transformation in the sanitation sector. We need a **sanitation revolution**. Nothing short of a revolution will achieve the universal global access target.

We have to acknowledge that there will never be a **“one-size-fits-all” technology** due to geographical, environmental and cultural differences that may impact on the applicability of specific technologies. This sanitation revolution will have many dimensions.

With existing waterborne systems, we can change to more **efficient flushing, conveyance and treatment systems**. The movement here is from high-energy, technologies towards a bio-refinery approach that integrates treatment processes to produce fuels, energy or beneficiated products. There is also an opportunity for water efficient flushing and conveyance systems.

With existing on-site systems, we can invest in upgrades and introduce better management strategies that stimulate job creation and beneficiation of accumulated faecal sludge, to increase the longevity of these existing investments. South Africa, pioneered the social franchising approach for the **operation and maintenance of 300** school toilet facilities where local people were trained by a larger, more experienced engineering company to serve the school toilets in the areas where they lived in, through collaboration of our research entities, the **Water Research Commission, CSIR and Irish Aid**. This will be implemented through the **franchising model** – similar to fast-food restaurant chain – products - in this case, the servicing of toilets - were expected to be of certain quality with capacity and training needs facilitated by the franchisor, the more experienced engineering firm. New pedestals, that take into account user **preferences and limit trash disposal**, can be used as upgrades for existing pit latrine structures.

The second component of the sanitation revolution is that we plan to move from highly centralized, expensive wastewater treatment dominance to either one that has a **combination of centralized wastewater and localised low-water and no-water solutions**, or only low-water and no-water solutions. And where we continue to use water, it has to be **majority grey-water**. It is incredible that the majority of sanitation still uses drinking quality, very expensive water to flush a toilet.

As part of a process to consider sanitation solutions, we need to create a conducive legislative and fiscal framework that ensure political will and the introduction of a

paradigm-shift that challenges the old way of dealing with the sanitation challenges. Through my Department, advocating for the change of the **sanitation policy** in South Africa that encourages re-use of water and beneficiation of waste streams, and I am prepared to lead this noble course to a success.

From the above framework, we then need to have a sophisticated roll-out model that empowers local communities, encourages local communities' participation and educational programmes, both from a **hygienic and technology point of view**, to ensure the longevity of solutions applied. Importantly also, is the need for partnerships that straddles across the various stakeholders, both in the public and the private sectors as well as community structures. Collaboration between various the government departments should also take place at the level of planning.

In conclusion, and duly encouraged by the Swacch (Swatch) Bharat in India, we are engaged with a priority sanitation campaign in South Africa, and committed, in the spirit of Ubuntu, to the African Sanitation programme. We want for Africa, in partnership with Asia, the developing world and our partners in the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, to realise the game-changer of the Sanitation Revolution. One that will propel the world's poor and vulnerable into a position of dignity. One that will improve our water and energy security while lowering our carbon budget.

One that will free our people, especially Women and the Girl Child, to have the freedom to go to school, become economically active, and redefine our prospects for the 21st century as one of hope and development for all in a Sustainable Development Pathway.

Danyavaad

Siyabonga Thank you.