



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**KEYNOTE ADDRESS AT THE SOUTH AFRICAN YOUTH
WATER PRIZE 2017
BY DEPUTY MINISTER, MRS PAMELA TSHWETE
MANHATTAN HOTEL, PRETORIA
01 JUNE 2017**

Thank you Programme Director

Let me recognise in our mist:

Deputy Director-General - Ms Debra Mochotlhi
The Educators in the Water Family
The Participating Learners
The Past Participants
The Programme Officials
Honoured Guests

Please receive my greetings this evening on behalf of the Department of Water and Sanitation, in particular, the Minister, Ms Nomvula Mokonyane.

The Minister and the management in the Department would have loved to be here tonight and share with you this wonderful experience and moment with yourselves.

I also feel very much honoured to be invited and share reflections and ideas with all of you as our current participating learners, former participants and all the educators involved in this programme.

I would have loved to see even those schools, learners and educators from the provinces who could not make it to this level of adjudication.

Firstly I would like to thank all those provinces, schools, educators and learners who participated in the 2017 South African Youth Water Prize that will later be considered for our annual Stockholm World Water Week.

Your voice on water conservation and demand management has been getting louder and clearer in your communities. We are very happy to be associated with your schools and we recognise all your efforts as a contribution to our bigger vision on saving water.

Secondly I would like to welcome you all in Gauteng. This session is yours, feel free and do your best so that the adjudicators may take note of your story line and concept.

I wish to remind you that this programme came as a result of challenges we are facing as South Africans in the water sector which include the general scarcity of water, environmental pollution, lack of poor water and sanitation infrastructure including lack of technical expertise in the water and sanitation sector.

These challenges affect the quality of water, this include, our ability to store large quantities of water, management of water and sanitation facilities and the general reticulation of water for household use.

Your provinces and schools have been called upon to work with the Department to ensure that we work together to protect the environment against pollution, we work together with your communities to end water losses and to work with yourselves to develop the skills required in the water and sanitation management.

You may have noted the availability of potable water and waterborne sanitation facilities in most urban areas but this is not the case in rural areas and in small and poor municipalities.

We now need alternative technologies in the water and sanitation spaces that will provide new solutions in the management of sanitation facilities including water provision and usage.

Since 1999 the Department has introduced a number of young people in the water space and these students are spread in the nine provinces.

It is important for all us involved in this programme to ensure that it is sustained until all South Africans can talk and live water as part of their daily lives.

The prize monies are just a form of encouragement but the most important and the biggest prize will be when we achieve access to water for all in our country, in particular the current under served.

We therefore thank you for your understanding and commitment to work in this field. This sector must be transformed through participation of all races and genders.

More black people and more females must occupy this sector. The Department is providing bursaries in this programme and other programmes.

I am happy to announce that through this programme, nineteen (19) graduates have been produced and are now working for the Department.

For example you have seen Miss Nompilo Mahlobo who was a learner at Mehlokazulu High School in KwaZulu-Natal Province. She got our bursary, she studied Hydrology and she now works for the Department. Isn't that good?

In order for us to succeed as young people and learners we must first respect our educators so that we can learn from their life experiences.

We must also love our families in order to recognise the efforts made by our parents towards our upbringing and education.

We must also have a responsibility to control ourselves and appreciate our development into adulthood as a reality. This means we have to do certain things now as children so that we can stand our responsibilities in adulthood. You cannot learn when you mix childhood and adulthood.

Our educators have done so well in enlightening our communities on the water challenges and affording you this opportunity to study and acquire these scarce skills through education.

Please take note of all presentation and ask very difficult questions so that when you go back home you have a very good understanding of this programme.

Ladies and gentlemen, enjoy the evening and the rest of your stay here and have good and interesting time on the programme.

I thank you Chairperson