



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

ADDRESS BY MS NOMVULA MOKONYANE, MINISTER OF WATER AND SANITATION, DURING THE CELEBRATION OF GLOBAL HAND-WASHING DAY IN THE MATLOSANA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY, DR KENNETH KAUNDA DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY

13 OCTOBER 2017

SPEAKER'S NOTES:

GLOBAL CONTEXT: TOWARDS SANITATION AND WATER FOR ALL:

- At the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit on 25 September 2015, world leaders adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (which includes a set of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to end poverty, fight inequality and injustice, and tackle climate change by 2030). Titled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, the set of 17 goals and 169 targets came into effect on 1 January 2016, replacing the Millennium Development Goals adopted in 2000.
- The SDGs include a dedicated goal for water and sanitation (Goal 6), with associated targets that relate specifically to water, sanitation and hygiene. The inclusion of Goal 6 - “Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all” - was an important recognition of the critical role that water

and sanitation play in human development, and the fact that they underpin the elimination of poverty.

- Some of the Goals include targets related to access to sanitation and water for personal and domestic use. The 2030 Agenda calls for global partnerships to address the means of implementation to achieve the SDGs.
- Goal 6 has several components that represent major departures from former Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Most notably, the targets within the goal cover not only drinking water and sanitation, but the entire water cycle. Targets 6.1 and 6.2, the two targets related to drinking water and sanitation, set a higher bar than former MDGs did – they call for **universal and equitable access**.

GLOBAL HAND-WASHING DAY:

- On 15 October 2017, South Africa will join the World in celebrating Global Hand-washing Day in several forms and platforms to create awareness and encourage people to wash hands with soap in order to reduce childhood mortality rates and other related diseases, such as diarrhoea.
- This Day was declared by the UN in 2008, the year designated to accelerate access to sanitation services including hygiene education.
- About 1.3 million children die every year due to diseases related to poor hygiene practices, of which 800 000 are children under the age of 5.

In this regard, **Global Hand-Washing Day** seeks to;

- introduce simple behavioural changes, such as hand washing with soap, which according to research:

- Can reduce the rate of diarrheal infections by almost 50% and acute respiratory diseases by up to 25%. (When practiced by mothers and birth attendants, it can reduce neonatal mortality rates by almost 40%).
- Has been proven as the single most affordable and effective way to prevent diarrhoea and other hygiene related diseases as automatic behaviours performed in homes, schools, and communities.

ONE MESSAGE, MANY VOICES:

- There is a need to develop targeted Hand-washing messages:
 - messages should be targeted, clear and focused to the target audience or targeted communities.
 - Standardised key messages should be focused on promoting washing hands with soap at four (4) critical occasions.
- This is based on the risks of faecal-oral transmission of gastro-enteric pathogens being high if hand-washing with soap is not practiced at each of the following contaminating events:
 - *After visiting the toilet;*
 - *After handling/changing baby nappies;*
 - *Before handling food;*
 - *Before you eat or feed a child.*
- Hand-washing promotion should include the following hand-washing steps/ techniques meant to remove or reduce infection, causing germs.
 - *Wet hands and use soap;*
 - *Rub palms together to scrub;*
 - *Rub in between fingers, the back of the hand and the wrist;*

- *Clean underneath your nails;*
- *Rinse hands thoroughly with clean water; and*
- *Dry hands with clean cloth or wave them in the air to dry*

BENEFITS OF HYGIENIC BEHAVIOURAL CHANGES

- Hand-washing with soap provides real benefits and, as government, we need to realize that the impact of hygiene promotion – the washing of hands with soap in particular – has wider health implications, including:
 - The reduction of costs to the public health system, associated with the treatment of preventable illnesses such as diarrhoea;
 - Saving costs (for the households) associated with medical treatment;
 - Preventing absenteeism for school children who would be unable to attend school due to diarrhoeal diseases;
 - Improving women productivity while decreasing time they would spend caring for the sick at home;
 - Improving social acceptance amongst communities.

SANITATION CHALLENGES IN THE PROVINCE

- Key challenges related to sanitation in North West include the following:
 - Ageing infrastructure, which brings about disruption of services while hampering the growth of villages, neighbourhoods, towns and ultimately the municipalities;
 - Vandalism of infrastructure by communities, which compromises access to services;

INTENDED SOLUTIONS

- Frequent or routine Operation and Maintenance of sanitation infrastructure will go a long way in preventing service backlogs.
- Strengthening Health & Hygiene User Education in the delivery of sanitation projects.

CONCLUSION:

- The use of Smart Technology can help mitigate most of the sanitation challenges experienced;
- Studies have indicated that while the finger is often pointed at service delivery, the visible failure of many of the toilets that have been delivered – both old and new – points to a range of issues, “hard” and “soft” .
- In an assessment of school sanitation, research has indicated that there is a mismatch between infrastructure delivery and asset management; for an example, school infrastructure delivered without an effective management programme often fails.
- Conditions of safety, health and dignity cannot be maintained without vigilant management, which includes clear standards for managing toilets, providing the administration tools to implement these standards and providing support, monitoring and enforcement to ensure that standards are upheld.

Dankie

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