



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**REMARKS BY THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF WATER AND
SANITATION**

HON. PAMELA TSHWETE

**ON THE OCCASION OF THE ROSENDAL CLEAR WATER PIPELINE
LAUNCH**

ROSENDAL

03 MAY 2019

Programme Director: Councillor Rathebe

MEC for Cogta: Honourable Kgoabane

Honourable Executive Mayor of Dihlabeng Local Municipality : Councillor Makhamela

Honourable Speaker of Council: Councillor Lengoabala

Councillors Present

House of Traditional Leaders

Religious Fraternity Led by Pastor Kantini

Municipal Managers

Law Enforcement Agencies

Regional Head : Dr Ntili

Officials Present

Members of the Media

Community of Rosendal

Ladies and Gentlemen

Good morning

I am deeply honoured to be here today as we are here to celebrate the handing over of the Rosendal Clear Water Pipeline to the Dihlabeng Local Municipality and the community of Rosendal.

The Rosendal section of the Dihlabeng Bulk Water Supply Scheme with a construction of a Pipeline from Paul Roux to Rosendal came at a cost of R 59 million. This part, which specifically targeted Rosendal, will benefit 892 households, which translates to a total population number of 3702 people. The project was completed on the 16th May 2018, and 41 local labour jobs were created. In addition, two Community Liaison Officers were also employed. Through all of this, the issue of gender and youth was considered.

The Dihlabeng Bulk Water Supply Scheme is implemented to ensure a sustainable and long term solution for the water supply problems that have been experienced in the Fouriesburg, Paul Roux, Rosendal and Bethlehem areas.

South Africa has been hit by drought from the year 2014 up to 2019, with devastating effects to say the least. The farming sector suffered the most during the drought as food security was under threat and this had a ripple effect on the economy of the whole country. Simply put, without water, the farmers cannot irrigate the fields and livestock cannot survive without proper grazing land and water.

I want to applaud the Department of Water and Sanitation and COGTA on the way they manage to handle the effects of drought, without any reported casualties. Drought is brought by climate change, and the only way we can survive the effects of drought is by conserving the little water that is available to us and use water sparingly. Climate change is a slow, natural cycle that causes the earth's temperature to rise and fall periodically over centuries. Climate change has a profound impact on human life, and among many changes, it also influences temperature shifts, food security, and water resources.

We learnt many lessons during the drought, and the first one of those being how to manage the situation and administer proper assistance. Managing the effects of drought proved to be the best response, as we cannot stop this natural phenomenon

from occurring. It also taught us the importance of water storage, and sadly, South Africa is behind in comparison to other countries when it comes to that. That is why the Department has an annual **Water Harvesting campaign** to highlight the importance of harvesting water and storing it for use in times of need. The Department of Water and Sanitation and COGTA need to work together in order to improve things in this regard.

Water is life and indeed water has no substitute. Houses cannot be built if there is no water, the hospitals cannot function without water as patients need water to drink their medication. Farms cannot function without water, businesses cannot function without water.

I could continue the whole day about the importance of water or can simply put it like this- **'the world cannot function without water just like a human body cannot function without blood'**.

Before this project the only water resource that was available for the Paul Roux town area has been the groundwater abstracted from five boreholes.

What is encouraging to me is that this province realises that there is a need to optimise groundwater use as an important alternative for basic use of water.

It is for this reason that in the month of April the Department of Water and Sanitation highlighted this through the groundwater campaign. This was the theme of the month as we were raising awareness to explore groundwater use to assist the surface water that is drying up. Groundwater is secured as it does not evaporate as we experienced low dam levels and rivers stopped flowing and turned to small streams during the drought. However the groundwater is also vulnerable to being polluted just like surface water, so I urge the community to make use of proper dumping sites and practise approved disposal waste methods

I am glad that the MEC of COGTA and the Mayor are here because the ownership of this infrastructure will be vested with Dihlabeng local municipality and they will be responsible for the Operation and Maintenance.

I urge the municipality to budget for proper operation and maintenance of this project as that is the only way it can service the people of Dihlabeng for many years to

come. It is more cost effective to maintain the infrastructure we have than to construct new one every few years. The other advantage is that it will ensure a consistent water supply to the people.

Security of the project is also very important to protect the infrastructure from the bad culture of vandalism. There has to be a joint effort between the municipality and the community to take ownership and safeguard this project against misuse and vandalism. The on-going vandalising of the same infrastructure that benefits the community remains undesirable and is a criminal offence. If you vandalise water infrastructure then you must know that you are taking away life. Let us take pride in looking after our infrastructure, as this is a legacy for generations to come.

Illegal connections to water infrastructure remains another thorny issue. People should learn to approach the municipality when they seek the services and not take Law into their own hands. There are many dams in South Africa that do not benefit the communities, local government needs to change this through reticulation of water so that all the people can have access to water. The municipality must further explore making illegal connections legal through supply of water meters so that those who can afford to pay can pay. Those who cannot must be encouraged to apply for the Indigency program of the municipality. The North West province has championed this concept through budgeting for the refurbishment of boreholes and reticulating the water to the households. This speaks to the service delivery that the government has promised to the people of South Africa.

In conclusion, on the 8th May which is 5 days from now South Africans throughout the country will be voting for the National Elections.

As the saying goes “ Your Vote is Your Secret”, my vote is not a secret I will vote the ANC as that is the only political party I trust and has done a lot for the people of South Africa. I urge all of you to go and cast your vote on the 8th May 2019.

I urge you to go out in numbers and vote in honour of those who fought for our freedom.

Let us not disappoint the stalwarts who have made South Africa to be what it is today. Yes, we know that in some areas, there are still challenges but your vote will

ease those challenges. I must admit that mistakes were made along the way but the time is now to rectify those mistakes. Remember the closing clause of the Freedom Charter “***These Freedoms we shall fight for side by side throughout our lives until we have won our freedom*** “

Let us not take things for granted because voting is a right that was hard fought for even beyond these borders.

Vote for a government that support all municipalities and communities regardless of their political affiliations. There is no other government that you can trust except the ruling party, vote right and vote for the speeding up of services delivery. Vote for the people’s choice-the glorious movement of Tata Mandela and Tata Tambo.

Once again, thank you for allowing us to be part of this occasion, thank you to COGTA and MEC , Preparatory Team and Regional Head, the Executive Mayor and Speaker of Dihlabeng Local Municipality and to the Department of Water and Sanitation in the Free State Province. Thank you for all the support and good work done.

Let us work together to build a better country and better South Africa.

Thuma Mina

Enkosi

I thank you