

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PROVINCES

OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY MINISTER

Honourable Judith Tshabalala

31 May 2023

BUDGET VOTE 41 SPEAKING NOTES

Honourable Chairperson,

Honourable Minister Senzo Mchunu,

Honourable Deputy Minister David Mahlobo,

Honourable Members of the NCOP.

Ndaa, Avuxeni, sanibonani, dumelang, molweni, goeiedag, good morning.

Honourable Chairperson,

As we conclude the Month of May and tomorrow, begin our Youth Month, I would like to remind all members of this esteemed house that, of the words expressed by the longest serving President of the African National Congress, Oliver Reginal Tambo, when he said that “*a country that does not take care of its children does not deserve its future*”. It is in this light that the ANC government, whenever we hear of sewer spillages and sanitation issues that affect the schooling of our young population that we will speedily attend to them. We went, under the direction of the Minister, Senzo Mchunu, to the Vaal, Katsieng and recently to Rustenburg to attend to water and sanitation challenges.

This we have done because, we remember very well that the future of this country depends on its youth. As Nelson Mandela aptly stated, "*education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world; and that education not only equips individuals with necessary skills for economic success but also plays a crucial role in nation-building and reconciliation*".

Honourable Chairperson,

Local government is central to providing crucial services to the people of South Africa, as highlighted in the Constitution. The Constitution recognizes the vital role of local government by empowering municipalities to deliver democratic and accountable governance, along with sustainable service provision. Municipalities have the autonomy to handle local government matters, generate revenue, and impose taxes, placing them at the forefront of providing essential services to communities. The Constitution also emphasizes the importance of cooperative governance, promoting collaboration among national, provincial, and local spheres to enhance service delivery efficiency. Provinces, on their part, possess the authority to enact legislation that ensures peace, order, and good governance within their regions.

The District Development Model adopted by the democratic government aims to enhance intergovernmental relations and expedite service delivery to the people. This model facilitates faster and more efficient provision of services, including water and sanitation, to communities. By promoting collaboration, coordination, and community involvement, it ensures targeted interventions, efficient resource allocation, and improved service delivery outcomes.

The revised Medium Term Strategic Framework has prioritized water and sanitation as a key focus area, with the goal of enhancing service delivery in this sector. This emphasis aligns with the objectives of the Economic Recovery and Reconstruction Plan and the National Development Plan of the government. By aligning these plans, there is a concerted effort to address the challenges in water and sanitation provision, improve service quality, and contribute to overall socio-economic development in line with national goals and aspirations.

The government's investment in water and sanitation infrastructure demonstrates a commitment to addressing sector challenges and fulfilling promises outlined in the 2019

elections manifesto. Efforts are focused on building municipal capacity to provide reliable services, issue permits efficiently, and enforce regulations and by-laws effectively, promoting investment, job creation, and improved service delivery.

The significant progress in water services infrastructure development and increased funding, of about R15.5 billion under the Water Services Management, through grants, demonstrate the government's commitment to improving access to clean water and sanitation. These investments not only address basic needs but also promote economic growth and job creation, reducing inequality and supporting emerging sectors. By monitoring performance and aligning with national development objectives, the government is actively working towards fulfilling promises made to our people. Our continued support and investment in the sector are crucial for driving holistic development and improving the quality of life for all South Africans.

The allocations provided for various municipalities underscore the importance of strategic investments in infrastructure and development. These financial resources play a crucial role in addressing the needs of communities, enhancing service delivery, and stimulating economic growth. The significant funding allocated to different regions indicates a commitment to equitable development and improving the quality of life for residents. By directing resources towards infrastructure projects, job creation, and service improvements, these allocations have the potential to transform municipalities, boost local economies, and foster sustainable development. The importance of these allocations lies in their ability to empower municipalities to meet the demands of their populations, drive progress, and create opportunities for a brighter and more prosperous future for all.

Investment in Infrastructure

Our government has recognised the importance of prioritising water and sanitation initiatives, and to this end we need to ensure that there is visible impact on the ground. The ERRP has investment in infrastructure as one of the key drivers towards economic growth and job creation, in order to deal with the triple challenges of poverty, unemployment and inequality.

We all know that the previous undemocratic has created skewed developmental patterns, with a primary focus on developing the formerly white areas and neglecting the black townships,

especially in the rural areas where inferior infrastructure was developed and leaving many without water and sanitation infrastructure.

Through the DDM, the ANC government has made significant investment in the provision of connected water to our communities, thereby ensuring that they do not solely rely on collecting water from the rivers. In addition, our Department has ensured that we adequately address challenges of water reticulation, building dams, increasing our water reservoirs. We have given attention, in this Budget to the construction of wastewater and water treatment plants in order to ensure reliable water supply to all South Africans. This is done in order to ensure that there is equitable distribution of our water resources, in line with the provision of our Freedom Charter.

As custodians of the constitution, we have a clear obligation to support and regulate municipalities in their crucial role of service delivery. Through the management of the Regional Bulk Infrastructure Grant (RBIG) and Water Services Infrastructure Grant (WSIG), we are committed to allocating significant funds to address infrastructure needs across the country.

With an allocation of 10.1 billion rand for RBIG and 4.6 billion rand for WSIG, we are able to fund over 130 projects and 400 projects respectively. These grants are instrumental in addressing critical infrastructure gaps, ensuring reliable water supply, and improving service delivery to communities.

By strategically investing in these projects, we are making a tangible impact on the lives of our citizens, fostering economic growth, and creating job opportunities. Our efforts are focused on promoting sustainable development, enhancing the quality of life, and building resilient communities.

Honourable Chairperson,

In conclusion, one of our commitments is to fight corruption within the water and sanitation sector as we know that this deprives our communities with the much needed services. Fighting corruption is a top priority for the government and we warmly welcome the progress made in Special Investigative Unit (SIU) cases. However, it is crucial to establish adequate measures to combat corruption effectively. This requires enhanced collaboration among the various agencies tasked with fighting corruption. In the past week, we have presented before the Portfolio Committee an update on progress made in terms of SIU cases in within the Department of Water and Sanitation. As indicated by government, we are looking at making use of state institutions in the delivery if water and sanitation infrastructure so as to deal with the corruption that goes with tenders. **#AskiesMakuBuhlungu**

The Department of Water and Sanitation, led by Minister Senzo Mchunu, deserves commendation for actively engaging in addressing water and sanitation challenges. Collaborative efforts with municipalities and mobilizing water boards have led to the implementation of major projects across provinces, demonstrating a commitment to enhancing water infrastructure and resolving shortages. However, it is crucial to recognize that poor governance and weak management within municipalities are root causes of these issues. A comprehensive approach, including proposed amendments to the Water Services Act, is necessary to address these underlying problems, ensuring sustainable water management and preventing future deterioration. Resolving governance and management challenges is imperative for long-term solutions and effective provision of water and sanitation services. By prioritizing these efforts, we can establish a foundation for sustainable development and improved living conditions for all South Africans. Our commitment to leaving no one behind, as emphasized by the President, is evident through the interventions led by the Office of the Minister and the utilization of the District Development Model. By placing Water Boards at the forefront, we not only improve the well-being of local communities but also ensure the state's developmental role. Despite the difficulties faced, we express our apologies and remain determined to fulfill the President's vision of an inclusive and ethical developmental state. Through tireless work, we strive to create a better future for all, fostering sustainable development and leaving no one behind. **#AskiesMakuBuhlungu**



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

I thank You.

Word Count: 1 294