



MEDIA STATEMENT

Water and Sanitation Department vows to accelerate Operation Bulela Metsi project to address severe water challenges in North West

20 October 2023

The Department of Water and Sanitation has rolled up its sleeves as a means to accelerate the provision of water in North West through the implementation of Operation Bulela Metsi, an initiative geared towards enhancing access to consistent and reliable water supply in the province.

This is evident as all hands are on deck in the construction of the Ikageng 25 mega litres ground reservoir in the JB Marks Local Municipality.

The construction of the reservoir is funded through the Department's Regional Bulk Infrastructure Grant (RBIG) with the municipality as the Water Services Authority, appointed as the implementing agent. Work commenced in January this year and is expected to be completed by July 2024, with more than 100 job opportunities for locals in the pipeline.

The reservoir and the new bulk distribution (gravity) pipeline will supply water to communities in Ikageng Proper, Ikageng Ext. 1,4,5 9, 12, Potchindustria, Mohadin as well as the Northern portion of Ikageng Ext. 7.

The project came about as a result of the decommissioning of the Ikageng West Reservoirs, which rendered the Ikageng Proper and Potchindustria networks without any storage capacity.

A new reservoir had to be constructed to meet the required storage capacity, with special care taken to position a new reservoir to ensure that it is not constructed in a dolomite risk zone.

Close to 22 000 households and a population of 94 201 will benefit from the successful completion of the reservoir.

Adding to this, the reservoir site is suitable to cater for the future developments at Mooibank to the south of the N12, and the platform will be ready to accept additional ground reservoirs. The position of the new reservoir site is also suited to accommodate any future developments once the urban edge is extended to the northwest of the reservoir site as proposed in the recent Spatial Development Framework.

The reservoir construction forms part of the upgrading of the Potchefstroom Water Treatment Works project which consists of six phases including refurbishment and upgrading the treatment plant, extension of AC pipeline, upgrading of the Ikageng Pump Station and the

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construction of a New Rising Main and Bulk Distribution Pipeline in Ikageng. The project is one of several mega water projects which are being accelerated by the Department and other role players, through the Operation Bulela Metsi initiative, to ensure reliable water supply in the province.

The 'Operation Bulela Metsi' project is a culmination of the hard work carried out by technical task team established by the Minister and the Provincial Government in January this year, to conduct an assessment on the state of water and sanitation services provision in the province and come up with measures to address the challenges and ensure sustainable provision of the services.

On Friday, 20 October 2023, President Cyril Ramaphosa accompanied by Minister Senzo Mchunu and several other Ministers conducted an oversight inspection of the construction site as part of the District Development Module (DDM) Presidential Imbizo in North West, wherein Minister Mchunu made a commitment to fast-track the implementation of bulk water projects in water strained communities.

The Department has since put wheels in motion to collaboratively work with the provincial government and its entities as per the directive by Minister Mchunu, with an aim of ensuing water security in the province and across the country.

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