



INTERNET ARTICLE

Lesedi la Krete learners want to be counted as water and sanitation ambassadors

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The learners of Lesedi La Krete Primary School in Orange Farm, South of Johannesburg, raised their hands to be counted in water conservation advocacy when they joined the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) in its Sanitation campaign.

The Sanitation campaign was taken to schools in Orange Farm to raise awareness around sanitation, hygiene issues, and how learners can be at the forefront of a cultural change in the way water is consumed and valued.

Ms Lungile Zulu, who is DWS' Chief Development Expert: Health and Hygiene, said the safely managed water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) services are an essential part of preventing and protecting human health during infectious disease outbreaks, including the current COVID-19 pandemic.

"Being here with the learners today is an indication that the Department is committed to working with everybody to realise the aim of safe sanitation for all by 2030," said Ms Zulu.

Ms Zulu added that all schools should have sufficient toilets and hand washing facilities to meet learner's needs. The toilets and washbasins must be in working order and regular maintenance is needed to prevent flooding, blockages and breakages.

She said it was vital that from an early age children learnt about conserving not only water but also protecting the environment and look after sanitation so that the pollution of water resources did not take place.

"We cannot isolate the issue of sanitation and hygiene from other issues that relate to the environment. What we do in our environment has an impact on our livelihoods and therefore need to look at these issues in a holistic manner", she said.

Lesedi la Krete Principal, Moroeng Sebatlelo said he was appreciative that the Department had chosen his school to be part of the Sanitation Month, adding that now that they have learnt about the importance of safe sanitation, saving water, they would do whatever they could to educate the learners and their community.

"Learners deserve a healthy learning environment with easy access to safe and sustainable water, sanitation and hygiene services. Lack of access to adequate sanitation facilities can lower attendance and educational achievement in schools," emphasised Sebatlelo.

Chairperson of the Orange Farm Water and Sanitation Community Forum, Mr Selby Ramolaise, applauded the Department for raising sanitation, hygiene services, and water conservation, especially for involving the learners. He reiterated that it was through partnerships that the messages of safe sanitation could find resonance with communities.

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“The Department will never be able to solve the issue of sanitation and water if it works alone. To be effective, it needs to have partners and schools such as ours that can help the Department because at the end of the day shortages of water and hygiene issues affect all of us,” he concluded.

KHULEKANI NGCOBO

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