



INTERNET ARTICLE

Handing over of completed sanitation facilities to rural villages in Limpopo confirms government's commitment to provide dignified sanitation - Deputy Minister Seithloho

14 November 2025

Water and Sanitation Deputy Minister, Sello Seithloho said the handing over of Ventilated Improved Pit (VIP) latrines to the community of Ga-Mathabatha Village in Lebowakgomo, Limpopo, is an indication of government's commitment to adhere to the country's constitution by providing dignified sanitation to the citizens, and to achieve the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal 6 (SDG 6) which is focused on ensuring access to water and decent sanitation for all, by 2030.

Deputy Minister Seithloho said this during the handover of the sanitation facilities to the community of Ga-Mathabatha Village in Limpopo. He was accompanied by Cllr Merriam Molala, the Executive Mayor of Lepelle Nkumpi Municipality, and Cllr Monica Mohale, the Member of the Mayoral Committee (MMC) for Infrastructure, as well as Kgoši Moleke Mathabatha, a Traditional Leader of Ga-Mathabatha village.

The handing over of completed toilets to the community is a continuation of Deputy Minister Seithloho's month-long *Sanitation Month* campaign, led by the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) from 15 October, observed through Global Hand Washing Day, to 19 November which marks World Toilet Day, to break the taboo of talking about sanitation and to also raise awareness of the consequences of lack of sanitation.

World Toilet Day seeks to raise awareness of the 3.4 billion people living without access to safe toilets globally and to accelerate action to tackle the global sanitation crisis.

"This is an indication of government's commitment to ensure that no one is left behind in terms of having a dignified sanitation, be it in urban or rural areas. It is a known fact that some communities do not have conventional toilets that uses water to flush, but it does not mean that they cannot have a proper and dignified sanitation facilities. The Department of Water and Sanitation therefore ensures that communities without the necessary water infrastructure, also do have access to proper sanitation. We are not contravening the Constitution, but we are rather adhering to it by bringing appropriate, dignified, and safe sanitation, through innovative means, to our communities," said Deputy Minister Seithloho.

The Executive Mayor of Lepelle Nkumpi Municipality, Cllr Molala also reiterated the same views, and said the handover of the sanitation facilities is a significant milestone in the community's journey towards a cleaner, healthier, and more sustainable future. She further stated that it also symbolises the collective commitment of three spheres of government to improve the quality of life for all.



“We would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to the Department of Water and Sanitation and Capricorn District Municipality for their unwavering support and dedication to ensure that proper sanitation is achieved for our communities that are mostly rural. Sanitation is not just about clean water and proper waste management, it is also about dignity, health, and empowerment. It is about ensuring that every individual, especially our children and vulnerable population, have a safe and hygienic environment to live, learn and thrive. Proper sanitation is a fundamental human right, and today, we take a big step forward in realising this right for Mathabatha and Mafefe Communities,” she said.

The provision of dignified sanitation is in line with the Department's approved Water and Sanitation Norms and Standards, which stipulates that a municipality designated as a Water Services Authority (WSA) should provide basic sanitation services to all consumers or potential consumers in its jurisdictional area inclusive of people residing on private owned land as guided by the Water and Sanitation policy on privately owned land of 2023.

The Standard of basic sanitation services includes a provision of a toilet with a functional handwashing facility in the yard, which is safe and reliable, environmentally sound and easy to clean, provide privacy and protection against weather, well-ventilated and keep smells to minimum as well providing for an effective and acceptable sanitation technology.

The Standards also requires the municipality to ensure proper waste water treatment and faecal sludge management including a safe faecal sludge emptying, transportation, treatment and the disposal or beneficial use method.

According to the General Household Survey 2024 Report, households in Limpopo province with access to improved sanitation have increased from 58,5% in 2021 to 62.2% in 2024. This means only 30,7% of households are served with waterborne sanitation system that are connected to centralised Waste Water Treatment Works (WWTW), and about 31,5% of households are served with Ventilated Improved Pit toilets.

Capricorn District Municipality received R9.6 million from the Department's Water Services Infrastructure Grant (WSIG) to construct Ventilated Improved Pit latrines, in the 2024/25 Financial Year. About 515 toilets were built and have been allocated across Ga-Mathabatha, Mphaaneng, Success and Ga-Madiba Villages. The project is part of the department's efforts support Water Services Authorities (WSA) to accelerate backlog reduction, enhance the sustainability of services especially in rural areas and to support the closeout of existing bucket eradication programme intervention in formal residential areas.

Deputy Minister Seitholo called on the communities to refrain from throwing foreign objects in the pit latrines and encouraged them to consider the re-use and recycle of faecal sludge which can have economic benefits. He said the community should use sludge management to their advantage by venturing in producing biogas for energy, recovering nutrients for fertilizer, and using sludge in construction materials.

“Sludge management can shift to a more circular economy, creating new jobs and generating financial savings for municipalities, and can also be beneficial to the communities”, he said.

The DWS has developed the National Faecal Sludge Management Strategy in 2023 for on-site sanitation. The strategy will guide the sector on the safe management of faecal sludge to



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prevent groundwater contamination, safeguard public health, protects the environment throughout the sanitation service chain.

Sanku Tsunke

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