



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

INTERNET ARTICLE

Ageing infrastructure and other water challenges will be problems of the past –DWS

17 June 2015

The Department of Water and Sanitation's (DWS's) engagements with local government have identified a number of challenges; prominent of which were the issues of ageing infrastructure, lack of budgets for operations and maintenance, poor technical capacity including lack of proper water and sanitation plans.

Minister Nomvula Mokonyane stresses that in this financial year the DWS's top management will have to do an objective review of roles and responsibilities of local authority with respect to the capacity, leadership and viability of local government as Water Services Authorities (WSAs).

The Minister stressed these pointers during her address on Wednesday, 10 June 2015 at the National Council of Provinces (NCOP).

She added that, "In pursuit of solutions aimed at addressing these challenges the Department continues to work in close concert with the Department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs (CoGTA) and National Treasury to enhance and strengthen the Back to Basics Programme. To this end, clear benchmarks of acceptable performance have been set in an effort to ensure that all municipalities perform their basic responsibilities consistently and without fail."

The Minister added that while the Back to Basics Programme focuses, in general, on the 27 District Municipalities that are dysfunctional, on the other hand, the Department of Water and Sanitation, in co-operation with the Provinces of North West and Eastern Cape, has made Section 139 (1) (b) interventions on water and sanitation matters in Madibeng, Ngaka Modiri Molema and Makana and would continue with such on a case-by-case basis.

In the drive towards improved delivery of services to people, Minister Mokonyane added that we shall be guided by the following Strategic Priorities:

- *The Water Resource Management (WRM);*
- *Water Infrastructure Development (WID);*
- *Water and Sanitation Services (SS);*
- *Water Sector Regulation and Policy Development (WSRPD).*

"The achievement of these Strategic Priorities is paramount. In this regard, we, therefore, then, need to improve our service delivery model that will also have to be matched by the requisite technical expertise and capacity within the Department and the Entities," Minister Mokonyane concluded.

The total budget for the Department for the 2015/16 financial year is R16, 4 billion. Over the medium-term, this budget is expected to grow to more than R17 billion by 2016/17 as the Department strives to improve the delivery of service to the people.



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

In addition, the Department will transfer, R3, 7 billion in 2015/16 and 4, 0 billion in 2016/17 to the Water Trading Entity through the Water Infrastructure Management programmes.

The Accelerated Community Infrastructure Programme will receive R254 million in this financial year. The programme will focus on universal access to water services by implementing projects related to Water Conservation and Demand Management.

Furthermore, the programme will also attend to managing the revenue system whilst monitoring and evaluating the water supply systems through metering.

The Municipal Water Infrastructure Grant will receive more than R2.5 Billion. The programme aims to facilitate the planning, acceleration and implementation of various projects that will ensure water supply to communities that were not previously served.

In addition, DWS will also spend an amount of R31, 8 million on rain water harvesting to provide poor farmers with quality water including general assistance for their harvests.

The Minister added that in this regard, “we firmly believe that the funds allocated will go a long way to assist us in meeting the various challenges of water shortages, inadequate sanitation services and general infrastructure decay and dilapidation”.

Ike Motsapi