



INTERNET ARTICLE

DWS is a services-driven department – Minister Mokonyane

23 March 2015

The Minister of the Department of Water and Sanitation, Ms Nomvula Mokonyane says the South African Constitution enjoins the department to ensure the security of water supply for the total socio-economic development of the country, whilst also ensuring availability of and access to dignified sanitation for all.

According to Minister Mokonyane “the real beauty of what we do lies in the fact that as a services-driven department, we need to work within the environment that also ensures equity of access to its services”.

Minister Mokonyane reflects on these matters about the department in a foreword to the Department’s Strategic Plan for the 2015/16 to 2019/20 Fiscal Years.

She notes that being the political head of this department has allowed her to be even more acutely aware of what the national picture is like regarding the responsibilities she has been tasked with.

The Minister notes that lots of lessons had to be learnt within this short space of time, yet “one has been greatly assisted by one’s own experiences garnered by background and enhanced by interactions with communities at all levels. I am completely driven by the need to ensure the department achieves its strategic goals as collectively agreed upon with the department’s administrative leadership,” she reflected.

She explains that the fact that these are shared goals implies that all of “us are agreed as to the path the department must follow towards their realisation. With the requisite technical support from the members of the team married to the political will and direction from the Deputy Minister and I, there is no reason for us to not be able to achieve what we set out for ourselves.”

The Minister promised to continue to work with and be guided by the Portfolio Committee and Select Committee responsible for oversight over the department’s work, adding that this oversight and attention is necessary for “our focus on the broader necessities and requirements of the electorate.”

She added that “our regulatory framework is the fulcrum from which we derive the necessary legal parameters that ensure that our work is carried out within



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the prescripts of the law, even as we endeavour to do so with the required speed to ensure our communities do not remain un-empowered, whilst economic development is also aptly supported.”

Minister Mokonyane stressed that communities remain critical partners that will inform the Ministry and department of all the needs on the ground and these will remain a compass to ensure DWS remain steadfast in pursuit of the ideals of the necessary delivery of services. “The community leadership inclusive of the traditional leadership that we have great respect for, will continue to share with and advise us of the needs existent on the ground. Our water and sanitation sector entities remain a critical backbone as repositories of further skills and capacity we will always call upon to expedite the delivery of these services,” she added.

The Minister pointed out that the department will continue to enhance the development of new skills because the Strategic Plan: 2015/16 to 2019/20 revolves, with particular emphasis, on the previously disadvantaged, in all careers spanning the sector value chain. “Our co-operation with our sister departments and all spheres of government must assist us to collectively bring services to our people and more importantly in a coordinated fashion.”

She added that DWS is an integral part of the government and must work together with other role-players and stakeholders for the common good. “The private sector within our area of responsibility also has an important role to play by ensuring that where services are sourced by the department, such services are delivered at the highest level, ensuring not just satisfaction of being well paid but also the necessary comfort and happiness of those that have been served.”

In conclusion, the Minister said she believed that the Water and Sanitation team that Deputy Minister and she leads, with the competent and efficient support epitomized by the administrative head, Director-General Margaret-Ann Diedricks is ready and willing to take the levels of delivery of these critical services to a higher trajectory.

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