



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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Empowering municipalities and enhancing bulk infrastructure is key to improving service delivery

Government's vision and objective to enhance water provision to citizens coupled with the improvement of wastewater treatment works involving sanitation is set to roll into action.

The Deputy Minister of Department of Water & Sanitation (DWS) Pamela Tshwete pointed out that a large chunk of the R12 480 billion 2014/15 Departmental Budget is set to focus on water provision and wastewater treatment works which link the water resources to local government infrastructure.

Addressing the National Council of Provinces (NCOP) Budget Review on Wednesday, 23 July 2014 in Cape Town, Deputy Minister Tshwete explained that DWS's R12, 4 billion total budget is expected to grow to R17 billion during the 2016/17 as "the Department strives to tackle more priorities in society because water provision and an efficient local government are at the coalface of service delivery to citizens."

The Department has come to a conclusion that it is facing challenges of water and sanitation service deliveries following visits and engagements with Premiers, Mayors, and Municipal Managers in the Provinces of Western Cape, Free State and North West. Several outbreaks of violence were the order of the day in those parts of the country.

DWS is developing very "specific Provincial Action Plans with provincial leaders to deal with interventions. The Department has injected R12, 7 million in the 2013/14 period to the Learning Academy (LA) to deal with the problem of the shortage of skill including technical capacity to perform operations and maintenance of infrastructure.

To this end, DWS will be spending over R4, 6 billion through the Regional Bulk Infrastructure Grant in various projects across provinces to address these infrastructure challenges

The Deputy Minister noted that this meant that 62% or R7 737, 6 billion of the budget allocation will go to the Regional Implementation and Support (RIS). DWS is developing a Strategic Sourcing and Localisation (STL) project to focus on local content. DWS is collaborating with three government departments who include the Trade and Industry; National Treasury and Economic Development to finalise this process.



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The Deputy Minister added that though the Department derives its mandate from the Constitution where the right to water as a basic service is underscored in Section 27 (1) (b), DWS's also seeks direction from the directives of voters in the African National Congress (ANC) Manifesto and the vision of the National Development Plan (NDP) for accelerated service delivery.

The return of the sanitation function from the Department of Human Settlement by the President is a welcome initiative, as DWS believe that sanitation and water belong together. "As such, Honourable Chairperson, the Proclamation releasing the sanitation function to the Department has been signed by the President and the whole process will be finalised by the 26th of September 2014 allowing the Department access to the budget for sanitation," according to Deputy Minister Tshwete.

The Accelerated Community Infrastructure Programme (ACIP) received R247 million to focus on universal access to water services by implementing projects related to Water Conservation and Demand (WCWDM). This programme is also designed to manage the revenue system while also monitoring and evaluating the water supply through metering.

An amount of R1 billion has been injected to the Municipal Water Infrastructure Grant to facilitate planning, acceleration and implementation of various projects to ensure sustainable water supply. And. R30, 1 million will be spent on Rain Water Harvesting project to provide poor farmers with quality water for their harvest.

The water quality programme is keenly and strongly monitored by the Acid Mine Drainage (AMD) is being tackled by the Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC) which is assisted by the Inter-governmental Task Team officials and is reporting to Cabinet.

The War-On-Leaks (WAR) is one of DWS's flagship programme that is rapidly fledging across the country. The programme not only involves fixing leaking taps, but is also providing job opportunities to the youth, especially women.

Ike Motsapi