



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

INTERNET ARTICLE

Basotho swell with pride for providing life-saving water to South Africa

14 November 2016

The Basotho nationals who were affected by phase one of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project said they are proud that their country is providing much-needed water to South Africa and are also turning the tide against underdevelopment in their own country.

Malieketso Ramokoatsi of Khokhoba Village said the project brought with it some important spinoffs which had greatly improved the state of their country, citing the building of roads as one of the lasting legacies that would stay with them for a long time to come.

“At first we had misgivings about this project. We wondered how it was going to improve our lives when it was about us giving water to another country. But since then we have seen developments taking shape and our lives gradually changing,” she said.

Moea Ramokoatsi from Ha Ramokoatsi Village said when the news of phase one of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project was first brought to them it sent shockwaves to the community as they were not sure what to expect. He said the thought of losing their land to the project made them uneasy. Their fears were however allayed when they were compensated for their land which was affected by the development of the project.

“We were terribly worried about our livelihoods as most of us depend on the land. We questioned ourselves about this development and thought it was going to take away from us what matters most. But then the manner in which the whole process was handled made sure that although some of our land was affected we got what was due to us,” he said.

He said the Lesotho people were extremely happy that their country could come to the aid of South Africa in its time of need to deal with the serious challenge of water shortage, adding that extending a helping hand has come with benefits for their country.

Both the Basotho nationals expressed hope that the second phase of the project, which is expected to supply 780 cubic metres of water to South Africa for the next three years, would touch the lives of many other people as well.

They said they were hopeful that villages near the project that were currently experiencing water shortages would soon have it. In addition, they said there are still villages which do not have enough water and they hope that as time goes on, they as well will be able to get enough water.

South Africa, and specifically Gauteng, is heavily dependent on the water supply from Lesotho as it does not have its own sources of water. Upon its completion in 2025, the Phase two of the Lesotho Highlands Water Project will supply water to South Africa as the country continues to experience water shortage, a situation which is made even worse by the drought.

Hosia Sithole