



## water & sanitation

Department:  
Water and Sanitation  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

### INTERNET ARTICLE

#### **DWS's drought relief intervention programme bears fruit**

5 July 2016

The Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) has been hard at work with its special intervention programmes to nullify the effects of drought in areas affected by this malady.

DWS is providing drought support to municipalities through reprioritised funds for water and wastewater infrastructure refurbishment and development. The department also purchased and allocated a total of 118 mobile DWS water tankers and sixteen large 80 kilolitre storage reservoirs to municipalities.

Emergency schemes put in place during the drought include water transfers from the Lesotho Highlands Water Project Phase Two (LHWP2), emergency transfers from Tugela to Goedetrouw, the UThongathi River transfer to Hazelmere, and the augmentation of supply from Usuthu Water Transfer Scheme - Eskom supply networks - to municipalities in Mpumalanga. DWS re-allocated Water Services Operating Subsidy (WSOS) funding to address water losses at the bulk water line at KwaMhlanga, Mpumalanga.

Approximately fifteen other Civil Society Organisations such as Operation Hydrate, Gift of the Givers and Al Imdaad have been supplying bottled water and are drilling and equipping boreholes in drought stricken communities - specifically on school properties. Boreholes are fitted with pumps, Jojo tanks and filtration mechanisms to ensure the water is fit for consumption.

Where boreholes are within school yards, a tap is also made available outside the school property for use by the community.

Shoprite's Act for Change distributed at least 605 650 litres of water in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN), while Operation Hydrate distributed 13 million litres of water in 5 provinces and pledged to drill 28 boreholes. South African Breweries (SAB) also recently donated bottled water to communities in the Masilonyana Municipality in the Free State.

Drought disaster areas have been declared in eight provinces, through either provincial or district declarations, while a drought declaration is in its final stages for Gauteng province. In line with implementing operating rules at the dams, restrictions have been published for 37 dams, which include 7 water supply systems; restriction notices for 9 dams are in draft, while voluntary measures are being implemented at 2 dams and 1 system.

Restriction notices have in addition been issued by the Inkomati-Usuthu Catchment Management Agency (CMA) in Mpumalanga for four dams, while restrictions are also in place for 7 groundwater systems in the Northern Cape.

The department notes in a report that assistance for a total of 5 152 boreholes has been provided. These have either been refurbished, equipped or are in use but are now being allocated for drought intervention or represent numbers of new boreholes that have been drilled.



## water & sanitation

Department:  
Water and Sanitation  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

This report provides details of DWS' response to the present drought that has been rapidly spreading over South Africa after a slow outbreak since April 2014 when moderate, with pockets of severe to extreme drought areas, were evident in the eastern to central parts of South Africa. At the time, moderately to extremely wet conditions were experienced in Mpumalanga, Limpopo and the Western Cape.

Associated with the drought, dam levels started a downward trend since March 2014 from a level of 93.3%, but with a small increase in mid-January 2015 when it rose slightly to 82.6%. Since then it has decreased steadily and has been hovering between 54% and 55% since mid-February 2016.

**Ike Motsapi**