



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

INTERNET ARTICLE

War on Leaks trainees gives thumbs up to the programme for changing their lives

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The Department of Water and Sanitation's (DWS) War on Leaks Programme has provided a ray of hope for three students who are part of the training to acquire much-needed skills and to help them change their personal lives for better.

Dakalo Happy Mashamba, Phindile Nhlapo and Nomakhosi Mashinini were part of the 3 000 first intake of the programme who threw themselves body and soul to the training programme to obtain skills they hoped to use to turn their lives around. Having been unemployed and with no prospects of rising above the poverty line, the trio took the training opportunity with both hands and worked hard to realise their goals.

The programme is a presidential initiative that was announced in February 2015 by President Jacob Zuma in his State of the nation's address. The project is mandated to target the reduction of water losses in the country and to contribute to skills development of 15 000 plumbers, artisans and water agents.

During the programme's second intake announcement, which was held at Birchwood Hotel in Ekurhuleni recently, Mashamba thanked the Department and said the programme has provided him with knowledge. She has learnt how the water sector operates and has acquired entrepreneurial skills offered by the programme.

Mashamba, an instrumentalist, said the private sector had a role to play in absorbing the youth who had completed their training to gain experiential training.

"The challenge now is job placements. Companies must be called upon to absorb the youth so they can gain experience in their respective areas of study," he said.

Nhlapo echoed Mashamba's sentiments and thanked the DWS for the training. She said the private sector should be at the core of the programme, saying companies



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had a responsibility to contribute towards skills development. Nhlapo received training on plumbing.

Mashinini, who trained as a water agent, praised the programme and urged delegates present at the announcement to heighten awareness about the programme within communities to avoid being perceived as outsiders.

“A comprehensive awareness campaign is needed so that when we go to areas with leakage problems we are not seen as outsiders, but as people who have come to assist communities in dealing with their challenges,” said Mashinini.

Mashinini said it is especially important in informal settlements because that is where water quality challenges and unhygienic conditions are.

DWS Deputy Minister, Mrs Pamela Tshwete, said other students should take a leaf from the three students’ book as their conduct was exemplary, hoping that it would positively influence others students.

Deputy Minister Tshwete encouraged the youth participating in the programme to use the opportunity afforded to them by the department and to use it to better their lives.

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