



water & sanitation

Department:
Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

INTERNET ARTICLE

Joy as Jozini residents access clean water in their neighbourhoods

4 September 2014

Gogo Pauline Menyuka is an 84 years old Jozini, north-eastern, KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) resident who is healthy and fit. Her fitness, as she puts it, can be attributed to the more than 30 years she has experienced carrying buckets full of water, which she had to fetch from nearby wells and streams for domestic usage in her home.

Jokingly, she says, "Don't you expect me to be healthy and fit after having done this for the past 30 years?"

This experience has changed now. The change is due to the fact that the right to water is now a reality for the community of Jozini Local Municipality, in KwaZulu-Natal.

Gogo Menyuka spoke to us minutes after the Minister of Water and Sanitation (DWS) Nomvula Mokonyane together with Premier Senzo Mchunu and the local leadership launched the Jozini-Ingwavuma Phase 1A portion of the Pongolapoort Bulk Water Supply project.

New water taps are now within walking distance - about 25 metres of the households - as required by government's Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP).

Yes, indeed, Gogo Menyuka, spotting a big smile on her face, is right. For 30 years she has had to endure the hardship, pain and suffering of not only sharing water with animals, whilst travelling long distances to fetch water for use at home with her family.

On Friday, 29 August 2014, the lives of Menyuka and many other community members, were transformed immediately when clean drinking water was delivered in and around their neighbourhood. "I thank God for blessing us by making sure that we can access water right here in our areas. This is a very good thing to have happened to us the members of the community. I want to take this opportunity to thank our government and officials for working so hard to bring us clean drinkable water in our area," said Menyuka.

Another resident, 74-year-old Boniswa Ndlazi was also equally excited about having to access water from just a few paces from her home. "Government is really committed to fulfilling its promise of supplying us residents with clean and drinkable water. This is the beginning of good things to come. It is good to note that in future government will also deliver on the promise of our residents being able to access the resource right in our homes."

Minister Mokonyane said the launch of the Pongolapoort Bulk Water Supply project, Jozini-Ingwavuma Phase 1A, has profound implications for the people of Jozini. Although the Jozini Dam was built some thirty years ago, the community in the vicinity have continued to see infrastructure in their midst, but have not had access to water.

This first phase of the project stands at a cost of R368 million. This phase is an apt demonstration of government's will to bring services to the people. Minister Mokonyane also indicated that as this Phase 1A is celebrated, it is part of the steps that will finally ensure that the UMkhanyakude District Municipality, but more especially the Jozini Local Municipality receives universal coverage. Further, Minister indicated that the water tankers currently in use



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in the areas not yet receiving coverage will continue this service, ensuring that no one is ever without this essential service.

In her address to the community at the event Minister Mokonyane articulated the department's support for local government, where service delivery resides. This is essential as, according to Minister Mokonyane, "it happens during Women's Month, even as we celebrate sixty years of the life of the Women's Charter. We should always be conscious of the fact that women have always been oppressed, oppressed further than the normal oppression by decree; oppressed as they have not always been equal. Delivery of water services to communities can and should be equated to women achieving freedom from such inequality and oppression.

This project will supply potable water to the rural communities within the Jozini Local Municipality. The increased production of potable water assisted by the installation of bulk water and reticulation networks in the area will ultimately service a total population of 134 864 people within about 16200 households. The right to water is now a reality.

Minister Nomvula Mokonyane, Premier Mchunu and other high profile attendees were in the area to celebrate this august event together with the benefitting community.

Ike Motsapi

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