



water & sanitation

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Water and Sanitation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

INTERNET ARTICLE

Sanitation revolution should become a vehicle to attain objectives of the NDP – Minister Mokonyane

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Minister of the Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) Nomvula Mokonyane says the sanitation revolution should become a vehicle through which the objectives of the National Development Programme (NDP SA Vision 2030) can be achieved.

Speaking during her closing remarks at the Inkosi Albert Luthuli International Convention Centre, Durban, KwaZulu-Natal during the Alternative Sanitation Indaba Minister Mokonyane noted that the NDP 2030 objectives should be attained in a more organic and integrated manner to “realise a people centric radical strategic socio-economic transformation.”

She added that the question that begs an answer is understanding that South Africa is a water-scarce country and “how do we develop a sanitation infrastructure that is effective and demonstrates less dependence on water, yet promotes water re-use and harvesting?”

Minister Mokonyane added that “at the centre of this approach, as the deliberations here at the Indaba have pointed out, is the effort at introducing the use of innovative and technological advances that brings about benefits at every step of the sanitation value chain.”

She pointed out that obviously, there can never be a one-size-fits-all technology, and therefore, “as we move forward with the sanitation revolution we have to be alive to some factors, such as the climate change as well as geographical and environmental conditions that may impact on the applicability of specific technologies.”

The Minister explained that this revolution has many dimensions. She said the first dimension is the systems change “as we move from highly centralized, expensive wastewater treatment dominance to one that has a combination of centralized and localized waste treatment,” Minister Mokonyane added.

The second component is the movement from high-energy waste treatment technologies to low-energy using and actually energy producing waste treatment systems.

The next component of the revolution is water. “We must move from highly wasteful water-borne sewerage to low-water and no-water solutions. And where we continue to use water, it has to be majority grey-water. It is incredible that the majority of sanitation still uses drinking quality, very expensive water to flush a toilet. Flowing from the above framework, we then need to have a sophisticated roll-out model that empowers local communities. The principle of nothing about us without us should serve as a constant reminder that whatever we do, we should not do it for self-gratification, but for the restoration of the dignity of our people,” explained the Minister.

Minister Mokonyane told the audience that the Water Research Commission and Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (WRC/CSIR) social franchising sanitation model that was used in Eastern Cape schools is highly encouraging. The School Toilet refurbishing



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programme funded with assistance from both national and provincial government including the Government of Ireland trained local players, developed companies with local people who then went on to perform the refurbishment roll-out.

This has been recognised by the African Development Bank who is coming on board as the principal funder of the next phase of the project.

The Minister explained that the final component is the Governance Model. High-levels of local community participation in governance is the key to ensure longevity, and ward committees must be core to this enterprise. In this regard, we need to empower ward councilors with information about our plans, programmes and offerings to deal with water and sanitation challenges on the ground.

Ike Motsapi