



water affairs

Department:
Water Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

**Speech by Mrs E Molewa MP, Minister of Water and Environmental
Affairs**

**Handing over ceremony of the Ndulinde Sub Regional Water Supply Project
Ilembe District Municipality and Mandeni Local Municipality, KwaZulu-Natal
23 March 2011**

Premier of KwaZulu-Natal
Members of the Executive Council
Honourable Mayors
Councillors
Amakhosi
Programme Director
Honoured guests
Ladies and Gentlemen

Good Afternoon. It gives me great pleasure to join you in the celebrations and rollout of the National Water Week Programme for 2011. During this time, the entire country has rolled up its sleeves in the relenting fight to raise awareness about the importance of water and how each citizen can make a contribution in water conservation.

As we are engaged in this important campaign, we are also aware of the challenges we face as communities in rural areas with regard to access to water. We are aware of the impact, this lack of water has on livelihoods in these poor areas and how community development initiatives in agriculture and food security in general suffer from lack of water!

We have come to Ndulinde today as part of the water week campaign but also arising from the reality that our people need water and they need it urgently! The President has instructed us to speed up delivery of basic services for our people especially in the poor and water stressed Provinces of the Eastern Cape, Limpopo and Kwa Zulu Natal.

In response to that call and the plight of the poor people of this area in particular, we have come to launch the third phase of the Ndulinde Sub Regional Water Supply Scheme. This scheme will cost us an amount of R 116,579,664 in its entirety and will be completed in 2014. This will ensure that

over a period of time the entire community will have access to a potable supply of water to address the water security and other development issues we have spoken about in this regard.

Therefore, I am very excited that today, I officially hand over the Ndulinde Water Supply Scheme to you as the District and Local Municipality and the community at large. We do so with the full realization that every water project has its own challenges and constraints.

The roll out of water projects is hampered by the shortage of local water sources and in this District in particular, there are only two rivers that can be relied upon for use as bulk water sources. These rivers are the Thukela River and Umvoti River. The Umvoti River is currently being used to supply the town of Kwa- Dukuza and the plans for building a dam that will serve iLembe DM and UMzinyathi DM are at a feasibility stage with my Department.

The Thukela River is used to supply most of the Mandeni Local Municipality area and a Regional Bulk Water Scheme that will serve Mandeni and Kwa - Dukuza area is at detailed design stage and will be funded by us, the Municipal Infrastructure Grant, Private Developments, Umgeni Water and iLembe District Municipality.

It's also important to note that the scheme is located 36km north of Kwa - Dukuza, within the Mandeni Local Municipality, which is where a great deal of the water scarcity is experienced. A large proportion of the iLembe District Municipality is rural and poverty-stricken, with little social and physical infrastructure and very little economic opportunity.

With the scheme, we will be able to provide potable water supply to the Wards 5, 6 and 11 of Mandeni Local Municipality. This will serve a total of 43 000 people residing in more than 10 000 households in the area.

Ladies and Gentlemen we must also ensure that there is ongoing operation and maintenance of these facilities. One of the challenges we face in delivering services to our people is one of lack of adequate maintenance of our water infrastructure. We need to arrest this problem permanently and also raise the sufficient level of awareness to these communities about the need to take responsibility for the safeguarding of our infrastructure.

The previous water supply, in most parts of the wards was sourced from boreholes equipped with hand pumps; a majority of these are no longer operational. Other sources include basic water supply where raw water is sourced from a weir on the Matigulu River, the Mathonsi Water Supply Scheme, funded by the Department under the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP).

There are many challenges experienced with existing infrastructure including class three bore holes, where supply is not fit for human consumption, basic and RDP scheme sources are also unreliable and intermittent. This scheme will go a long way in dealing with some of these infrastructural challenges.

Here, the community will be served through standpipes and installation of zonal bulk meters as part of the District Municipality's s Water Conservation and Demand Management Programme. The standpipes will be upgraded to metered yard connections in the future. The network has been designed to cater for a higher level of service, taking future upgrades into consideration.

We are also pleased that such projects bring much needed job opportunities to our people which is one other major focus of our economic development objectives. This particular project is implemented using Labour intensive methods of construction and it also provides skills through on the job training.

We are committed as a department to make a concerted effort in striving towards backlog eradication so that all citizens have access to at least a basic supply of water and sanitation. It must be emphasized that whilst we strive to provide water for our people in the most remote and difficult terrains without compromising quality, Water Conservation must always be embedded in our minds.

South Africa is a water scarce country with an annual rainfall of less than 500mm per annum. It is with this notion in mind that we must make every endeavour to save every drop of this precious resource. Our prime focus should be on Informing; Educating and communicating this message to our communities, and in particular the target group of our youth and learners at our schools.

Whilst my Department is committed financially to the Regional Bulk Infrastructure Programme in your Province, we must ensure that we have a similar approach with regard to Water Conservation and Demand Management.

This will ensure that we have sufficient good quality water for our children and our children's children. We need to be water wise. Simple behavioural issues like closing taps, repairing leaking taps, reporting burst pipes and fixing toilet cisterns will go a long way in curbing water wastage.

It is with these programmes in mind that we continue to enhance service delivery within Municipalities so that a quality service could be provided to all our citizens.

Ladies and Gentleman, I would like to take this opportunity in conclusion to wish ILembe District Municipality; Mandeni Local Municipality and the community best wishes for the remaining phases of the Ndulinde Water Supply Scheme.

Water is Life – Working Together we can Save more of it!

Sonqoba Simunye!

I Thank You.