

**THE PRESIDENCY: REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

Private Bag X1000, Pretoria, 0001

**NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**QUESTIONS FOR WRITTEN REPLY**

**QUESTION NO: 3122**

**Date Published: August 2015**

**The Leader of the Opposition (DA) to ask the President of the Republic**

1. Is he aware of the report into the Madibeng Local Municipality water crisis that was put together by the Department of Water and Sanitation, which estimates that between 15 to 20 municipalities are faced with severe water shortages and collapsing water infrastructure;
2. What special projects is (a) he or (b) his Cabinet Ministers undertaking  to mitigate the water crisis facing the (i) specified municipality and (ii) various municipalities faced with a water supply system collapse as identified by the Department of Water and Sanitation’s report;
3. Has he, in co-operation with the Department of Water and Sanitation, commissioned any academic studies into the economic impact of recent prolonged water shortages in urban municipal areas such as (a) Johannesburg, (b) Ekhuruleni, (c) Madibeng and others; if not, why not; if so, what are the findings of these studies?

**Reply:**

Departments prepare and commission many investigations in the course of executing their sector responsibilities and mandates and not all of these reports are brought to my attention. The Outcome of these reports and investigations is however used by Departments to develop specific intervention programmes where appropriate.

In the Case of Madibeng, this Municipality has been placed under Administration, with effect from 23 March 2015, by the Provincial Government in terms of Section 139(1)(b) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa with regard to the Water and Sanitation Functions of the Municipality. The key reasons for placing the Municipality under administration with regard to these services is due to:

* Poor water and sanitation services which often result in water supply disruptions and poor water quality;
* Poor maintenance and operations of water and sanitation infrastructure;
* Uneven provision of services to communities; and
* Project delays due to prolonged processes and possible fraud and corruption.

The Department of Water and Sanitation is working with the Provincial Government of North West to implement a programmatic intervention which is addressing the reasons for the intervention.

The Departments of Water and Sanitation and Co-operative Governance have developed and are implementing support programmes and interventions as part of the Back to Basics programme for prioritized municipalities across the country facing water and sanitation shortages and infrastructure disruptions. These support programmes also take into account the outcomes from the Municipal Strategic Self-assessment System (MuSSA), the Blue and Green Drop Assessments as well as the diagnostic reports conducted by the Provinces.

Reporting on progress and monitoring of the interventions is done through the CoGTA MINMEC, the Implementation Forum for Outcome 9 and the InterMinisterial Committee on Basic Services.

**2. SUCCESSES IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND INTERVENTIONS**

**The following progress has been made**

* **Makana**;
  + Water supply has been stabilized and Grahamstown is now receiving water on a continuous basis. There is currently no disruption to educational institutions. The success has been largely due to the deployment of Amatola Water and support from the Department of Water Affairs in the Province;
  + Key interventions have been made to restore the supply of electrical, which has enhanced the capacity of pump stations; the refurbishment of raw water rising main; the restoration of plant capacity; and reduction and control of water losses.
  + A five year “turnaround plan/road map” was finalized following the Water and Sanitation Summit held in March 2015;
* **Madibeng**,
  + We have reinstated the water supply systems in Majakaneng which had not been working for eight years, through a very successful community based leak detection and repair programme under the management of Magalies Water;
  + The programme is now be rolled out to the broader Madibeng Municipality;
  + Twelve Water Forums have been established;
  + Good progress has been made to increase of the capacity and optimization of the Brits Water Treatment works;
  + A business plan has been finalized for the implementation of the five year “turnaround plan/road map”;
* **Ngaka Modiri Molema**
  + Sedibeng Water has taken over the operations of the former Botshelo Water Board and will support the retail services in Mahikeng for the next five years;
* We have seen the reduction of the water tanker services through the repair and reinstatement of infrastructure;
* A business plan has been finalized for the implementation of the five year “turnaround plan/road map”;

In addition to these specific actions a Programme Management Office (PMO) has been established by the Department of Cooperative Governance, coordinated by the Municipal Infrastructure Support Agency to specifically address the ongoing water and sanitation problems in the 27 identified Priority District Municipalities. A pipeline of projects is currently being compiled by the PMO for Amatola (EC) and Umzinyathi (KZN) District Municipalities. Bojanala and Sekhukhune District Municipalities will be addressed next.

**3**. The Department of Water and Sanitation is not specifically commissioning studies to determine the economic impact of prolonged water shortages) in Johannesburg, Ekurhuleni and Madibeng. It is however closely monitoring the state of non-revenue water (and water losses) in these Water Services Authorities (WSAs), and the economic impact this has, and to see whether the WSAs are meeting their water conservation and demand management targets, which have set by the Department.

The Department also (annually) monitors the vulnerability of all WSA nationally through Municipal Strategic Self Assessments, and is currently developing Municipal Priority Actions with these WSAs, based on the outcomes of the assessments, which feed into the WSA Water Service Development Plans, Integrated Development Plans, and Service Delivery Business Improvement Plans, to ensure that the identified areas of extreme and high vulnerability are addressed.

The above findings are available on the Water Services Knowledge System which is accessible on the website of the Department of Water and Sanitation.