

Masibambane enters Phase III
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A lead project of the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry, Masibambane enters its five year, third phase on April 1, 2007.

Since its launch in 2001 Masibambane has become known for its achievements in institutional support and development, fruitful sector collaboration and fulfilling national strategic objectives in the water sector. The programme has successfully integrated the three spheres of government around water issues to build the capacity of municipalities to be able to perform their functions of water services authorities.

In addition, it has built the foundation for further involvement of communities, civil society and NGOs in their quest to build a role for citizens in the regulation of the services they receive.

Now, in 2007, the strategic focus of Masibambane III is to look beyond the provision of basic services and the eradication of backlogs to ways in which water can be used to enhance the development principally of rural South Africans.

There are still many opportunities further to improve the integrated management of water at municipal level – water quality monitoring, waste discharge and waste conservation – which in turn offer more potential to put water to more productive use.

Proper use of water and good sanitation practices are catalysts for job and therefore wealth creation and it is with this in mind that ‘water for growth and development’ have become the watch words of Masibambane III.

Examples of the impact of Masibambane’s innovative approach to integrated water services is the relief on health services which the provision of a consistent and reliable water supply provides when good hygiene practices are able to break the cycle of opportunistic disease. Masibambane has in addition funded a position of Deputy Director for Health and Hygiene at the Department of Health for a greater alignment of health and water services.

In a water scarce country such as South Africa, which is aiming for 6% annual growth and the provision of first world services to its people, whilst addressing rampant poverty and the HIV/AIDS pandemic, Masibambane III is one of the essential mechanisms for the water sector’s achievement of **Water for Growth and Development**.

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