



# NEWSLETTER

IMPROVING LIVES THROUGH WATER

SEPTEMBER 2020



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## INTRODUCTION

Water is a catalyst for socio-economic development. As a sector-based water user association, Lebalelo Water User Association's (the Association's) purpose is to *"improve lives through water"*. Its vision is to *"be the strategic partner of choice for water management"*.

Its strategy sets out a three staged approach that not only aims to transform the Association but also to use water as a catalyst for socio-economic development in its area of operation.

These ideals will be achieved by acting safely in our operations; being open and honest in our dealings with our stakeholders, and exercising care and respect for their values.

# A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

In the August 2020 newsletter, I promised to keep our stakeholders informed about the roll-out of the COVID-19 water intervention in the Fetakgomo Tubatse and Makhuduthamaga local municipalities. In terms of the roll-out of the COVID-19 water intervention, the agreement between the Association, Sekhukhune District Municipality and the Department of Water and Sanitation was to:

- Support the Sekhukhune District Municipality with the supply of water to communities that are continuously affected by the lack of sustainable water supply in the Fetakgomo Tubatse and Makhuduthamaga local municipalities, from 16 April 2020 (the commencement date) to 30 September 2020 (the termination date).
- Provide 15 communities identified between the Association and Sekhukhune District Municipality in the Fetakgomo Tubatse local municipality with boreholes under the COVID-19 agreement to be undertaken and completed as per the programme.

The Association wishes to inform all stakeholders that the agreement to support Sekhukhune District Municipality with the supply of water terminated on 30 September 2020. Consequently, the water tankers that were made available to Sekhukhune District Municipality to fill up water tanks donated to the municipality were withdrawn on 30 September 2020. Sekhukhune District Municipality as the designated WSA responsible for the provision of water in its area of jurisdiction, will continue with the delivery of water to the donated community water tanks.

As indicated previously, the Association remains committed to supporting government to fulfil its service delivery mandate. Notwithstanding the termination of the agreement and withdrawal of the water tankers that were made available to Sekhukhune District Municipality, the Association is amenable to discussions with the Sekhukhune District Municipality on ways in which the parties can work together while respecting each party's mandate, to alleviate the lack of potable water in communities around the mines and along the Association's raw water bulk pipeline.

## **BERTUS BIERMAN**

Chief Executive Officer  
Lebalelo Water User Association

## EDUCATION

The key to any learning is a stimulating environment that enables spontaneous and real knowledge sharing. The Association is implementing three projects to support education in primary schools in its area of operation. These projects include the establishment of an Early Childhood Development (ECD) project, Literacy and Numeracy project and a Reading campaign.



**Early Childhood Development (ECD) project** –The Association is collaborating with the Sekhukhune East District of the Limpopo Department of Education to establish a Model Grade R Classroom in the Malokela Circuit. The Association is providing the classroom while the Sekhukhune East District of the Limpopo Department of Education is implementing the recommended Classroom





layout for all Grade Rs'. The purpose of the Model Grade R Classroom is to enhance ECD practitioners' teaching skills.

**Literacy and numeracy project** - Government is promoting whole-class interactive teaching, particularly within literacy and numeracy. Research has found that the use of Interactive Whiteboards has the capacity to improve teaching, teacher development and positive impact on student learning. An Interactive Whiteboard is a touch-sensitive board which is connected to a computer and a digital projector. From 2017, the Association started donating Interactive Whiteboards to primary schools in its area of operation. To date, three primary schools in the Malokela Circuit have received Interactive Whiteboards. Those schools are Shai, Kwata and Letoloane primary schools.

**Reading campaign** – Reading is a foundational skill on which all other learning is built and creates the opportunity for access to career opportunities. In 2015, government launched the Read to Lead Campaign whose focus is to ensure that all learners are able to demonstrate age appropriate levels of reading. The Association is partnering with Nal'ibali in furthering the campaign in its area of operation. The campaign seeks to create four key enabling conditions that support children's literacy development. It seeks to create the awareness and knowledge that reading for enjoyment has educational benefits, and opportunities for regular, frequent and enjoyable reading. It further seeks to identify and develop community role models who will share stories, encourage and model reading. Lastly, it seeks to make available relevant, high-quality reading material in home languages.

## SKILLS AND ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT

According to Statistics South Africa's 2019 mid-year estimates, a significant percentage of the youth (aged 18–34) in South African is facing unemployment which is the highest globally at 58%. What is even more concerning is that youth between the age of 15 and 24 years are not in jobs, education or training. The two main causes of youth unemployment include a lack of quality of education and relevance to the needs of the labour market.

The Association's socio-economic development strategy is aimed at encouraging people, especially the youth, to acquire skills that are relevant to the needs of the labour market, enable them to become economically active so that they can improve their lives and contribute to the development of economically vibrant and fully functional communities.



The Association is implementing a Youth Enterprise Development Programme aimed at entrepreneurial development whilst also providing well-rounded training that includes financial literacy and workplace readiness. Specifically, the Programme will guide students along the path to personal success by teaching participants to:

- Grow interpersonal skills and become a valuable member of any team;
- Gain an understanding of time management, business ethics, business planning and how to handle or create business functions;



- Build an understanding of market research, operations planning and management;
- Take control of their finances, marketing and branding; and
- Handle problems with integrity and wisdom and make decisions for the right reasons and in high pressure situations.

## AFFORDABLE INTERNET ACCESS

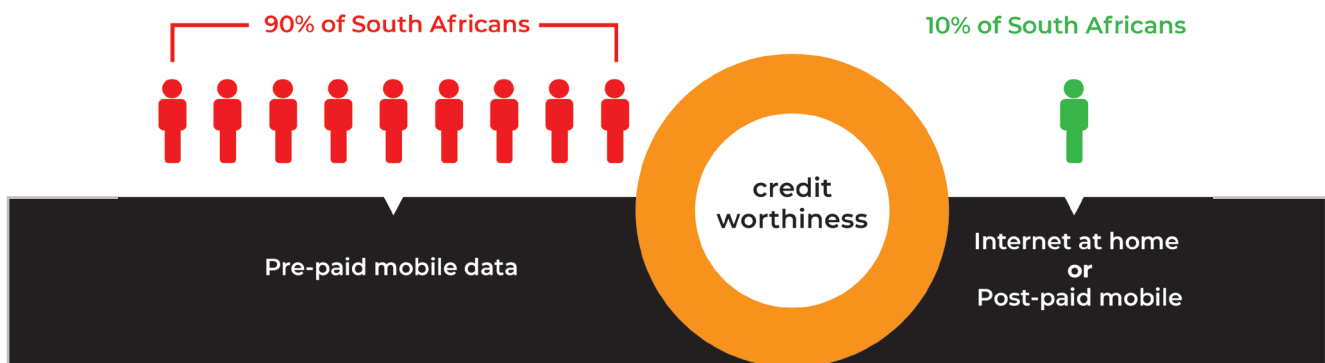
Approximately 3% of homes in the Fetakgomo Tubatse local municipality has fixed broadband access while the remaining 97% of homes have mobile data as their only option of access to the Internet. The 3% of homes typically pay around R500 per month for uncapped access and use about 500 gigabytes per month. The remaining 97% predominately purchase pre-paid

data at a very expensive premium for smaller denomination packages. Low income homes pay on average R330 a month and use about 3 gigabytes per month. The fact that 90% of lower income citizens pay over 100 times more for data than the 10% higher income citizens clearly shows a gross inequality in the cost of data.

### Why invest in affordable Internet Access?

On-line access to:

1. Jobs and work
2. Education
3. Social inclusion
4. Entertainment



The Association recognises that information and communication technologies bring great benefits for people, governments, and the private sector. Access to the Internet in particular, unlocks new development opportunities by opening new communication channels, providing access to information and services, increasing productivity and fostering innovation.

As a result, the Association has a plan to provide affordable access to internet in its area of operation. By providing affordable internet access, the Association seeks to:

- Stimulate and improve the local economy through Internet connectivity.
- Develop local business skills (Wi-Fi entrepreneurs) that harness the on-line economy.
- Create public Wi-Fi that is sustainable and has incentives for cost reduction in the long term.

- Provide an application and service that allows for reporting of crimes and community issues.
- Set up local entrepreneurial support that uses the Wi-Fi access.

The Association will use a wireless Internet access provider to connect the Wi-Fi access points to the Internet. The location of the Wi-Fi access points will be in strategic locations in the Association's area of operation to be accessible to its neighbouring communities. The favoured locations of access points are schools, clinics, government buildings, local shops (Spaza shops) or places of public gathering. The price for top up data will be set at R5 per day per device for uncapped Internet access. This fee will then cover the on-going cost of Internet access, support and commission of the Wi-Fi access point. Each access point will be required to contribute 1 gigabyte per device per month free and access to educational content to be zero rated.

