





NEWSLETTER

MSUKALIGWA

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Mr. MAJ Zwane

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF NAME: HERITAGE, HISTORY, AND TOURISM WITHIN MSUKALIGWA

Name is far from a mundane designation; it embodies succinct historical narratives seamlessly woven into quotidian discourse. These denominations epitomize the individuals we venerate, epochs we commemorate, and linguistic legacies we perpetuate. Within the Msukaligwa Local Municipality (MLM), the appellations of towns, localities, and myriad smaller settlements encapsulate narratives of profound resonance to both denizens and sojourners. The meticulous preservation and scholarly exegesis of these toponyms fortify communal identity while enhancing the region's allure and profundity for the discerning tourist.

The concurrence of Heritage Month and Tourism Month in South Africa during September presents a propitious juncture. As the nation collectively venerates its intangible cultural patrimony and galvanises domestic and international travel, Msukaligwa is poised to foreground the etymology, semantic depth, and polysemous denominations of its locales as integral components of its tourism portfolio. Heritage Month pays homage to cultural mnemonic traditions and vibrant living legacies, whereas Tourism Month accentuates the sector's pivotal role in economic stimulation and equitable development. The nexus of these observances is both pragmatically efficacious and symbolically resonant.

Illustrative exemplars elucidate this nexus. Ermelo, the municipal epicenter, founded in 1880 and christened by Reverend Frans Lion Cachet after a Dutch eponymous locale, now serves as a fulcrum of agrarian enterprise, industry, and railway logistics. Breyten, originating from the Bothasrust farmstead and eponymously derived from Nicolaas Breytenbach ca. early 20th century, reflects agrarian and colonial legacies. Chrissiesmeer / Lake Chrissie, situated in South Africa's preeminent inland lacustrine system, are ecological bastions attracting myriad waterfowl, meriting recognition as quintessential regional eco-tourism assets. Lothair, a toponym evocative of nineteenth-century literary allusion, bespeaks the heterogeneous cultural substrata influencing local nomenclature. These are not mere anecdotal curiosities but constitute a substantive contextual tapestry for the erudite visitor.

Toponymic significance transcends historically entrenched settlements. Within townships and informal settlements, the praxis of appellation remains dynamically intertwined with collective mnemonic and aspirational paradigms. Frequently, new communities commemorate liberation icons such as Joe Slovo, Chris Hani, and Mama Winnie Madikizela-Mandela

through place names and road dedications, manifesting grassroots heritage preservation. Nonetheless, this proliferative duplicity engenders logistical complexities vis-à-vis residential clarity, emergency responsiveness, and visitor navigation. Contentious deliberations ensue regarding retention or revision of toponyms, underscoring the contentious semiotics of place-naming.

South Africa's ongoing endeavors to reconfigure urban and civic nomenclature evoke polarising discourses. For proponents, renaming symbolizes overdue recognition and restorative justice, affirming African identities and historiographies within the public sphere. Conversely, detractors articulate reservations pertaining to fiscal implications, stakeholder consultation, and the potential obliteration of historical palimpsests. These dialectics reveal that toponyms are not only vestiges of antecedent realities but active instruments shaping contemporary identity and aspirational forward futures.

In African cosmologies, personal appellations wield profound existential import. Names are meticulously conferred, encapsulating genealogical narratives, commemorating seminal events, embodying aspirations, and invoking ancestral reverence. Naming is simultaneously a mnemonic vessel and prophetic beacon, anchoring individual identity while orienting toward prospective becoming. Hence, the christening of communal spaces after struggle luminaries serves dual functions: historical homage and normative exemplification for posterity, delineating pathways for the youth to emulate.

For Msukaligwa, toponymy is not an abstract academic concern but a matter of tangible import for socio-cultural cohesion and tourism development. Nomenclature constitutes the initial interface with visitors—manifested on signage, articulated in brochures, and embedded within oral histories. For residents, these names crystallize belonging, valorization, and spatial orientation. By safeguarding the authenticity of established toponyms, systematically archiving the genesis of township and settlement names, and judiciously overseeing any modifications, MLM can reconcile heritage preservation with progressive transformation.

This Heritage and Tourism Month invites us to recognise that a name transcends mere labeling; it is a cartographic repository of collective memory, an emblem of identity, and an enduring bequest to future custodians of Msukaligwa's rich cultural tapestry.



As we review the progress of Msukaligwa Local Municipality during the first quarter of the 2025/2026 financial year, it is critical to reflect on both our achievements and the mechanisms through which we engage our communities to ensure inclusive and accountable governance. This period has been characterised by strategic interventions, participatory programmes, and targeted initiatives that reinforce service delivery, strengthen institutional capacity, and enhance social cohesion within our jurisdiction.

A central focus of this quarter has been the continued observance of the theme “Building Resilient Economies for All”, which emphasizes the pivotal role of women in driving economic growth, leadership, and societal transformation. This theme reinforces the municipality’s commitment to dismantling systemic barriers such as inequality, unemployment, and socio-economic marginalisation that impede women’s full participation in the economy. In line with this, my office convened a Women’s Day programme, creating a structured platform for recognition, mentorship, and dialogue. These interventions are integral to building human capital, promoting gender equity, and enabling resilient local economies. Concurrently, we maintain a zero-tolerance approach to gender-based violence and femicide. The recent criminal incident in Weselton remains under investigation by the South African Police Service, and we await the legal process, reaffirming our stance that justice and accountability are non-negotiable in safeguarding human dignity.

Public participation remains a cornerstone of our governance model. The Mayoral Imbizo held at Ward 16 provided residents with a structured mechanism to interface directly with municipal leadership, discuss service delivery challenges, and co-create solutions. Critical interventions announced include a sewer infrastructure project, designed to eliminate persistent sewer spillages and mitigate public health risks. The success of this project depends on community cooperation with contractors, as well as sustained oversight by the Municipality to ensure timely and efficient implementation. I extend my appreciation to all sector departments and stakeholders who deployed mobile service units to support community engagement and facilitate service delivery during the Imbizo.

Strategic asset management and social equity remain high on our agenda. To this end, the Municipality has initiated a programme for the systematic distribution of title deeds across all wards. Title deeds not only formalise property ownership but also serve as instruments for economic empowerment, enabling residents to leverage assets for investment, credit access, and wealth creation. The programme commenced in Ward 16, including extensions 32, 33, and 34, and will continue systematically

to ensure full coverage. Ward Councillors are called upon to mobilise communities and provide logistical support to ensure that eligible residents access their entitlements. Parallel to this, the registration of indigents continues to be a strategic intervention aimed at targeting socio-economically vulnerable households with subsidised services. Municipal teams, in coordination with Ward Councillors, are actively engaging communities to optimise participation and ensure equitable access to these benefits.

Financial sustainability remains fundamental to service continuity. I extend my gratitude to all account holders who comply with municipal billing obligations, as timely payments underpin the Municipality’s capacity to deliver infrastructure and services. Residents facing financial hardship are encouraged to engage proactively with municipal finance offices to negotiate feasible repayment plans. The Municipality continues to contend with electricity losses arising from illegal connections, a practice that undermines infrastructure reliability and poses serious safety risks. Enforcement operations are ongoing, and we urge the community to desist from illegal connections to safeguard both public assets and personal safety.

Our Municipality remains committed to a multi-pronged approach that integrates service delivery excellence, community participation, infrastructure development, and social accountability. The path forward requires sustained collaboration between municipal leadership, sector departments, civil society, and residents to ensure that Msukaligwa is a municipality where quality services are guaranteed, infrastructure is resilient, and social cohesion is strengthened.

**Our Municipality
remains
committed to a
multi-pronged
approach that
integrates
service
delivery
excellence**



**ALDERWOMAN MP NKOSI
EXECUTIVE MAYOR**





ALDERWOMAN M.P NKOSI
EXECUTIVE MAYOR



ALDERWOMAN C.E MSEZANE
MMC FINANCE



ALDERWOMAN T.C MOTH
MMC TECHNICAL SERVICES



CLLR T.J MADLALA
MMC CORPORATE SERVICES



CLLR B.G MOTH
MMC PLANNING &
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



CLLR S.E NGOVENE
COMMUNITY & SOCIAL SERVICES

EXECUTIVE MAYOR

The primary functions of the Executive Mayor among others is to promote the image of the municipality, Preside over Mayoral Committee meetings, leads and promote social and economic development in the municipality, Promote intergovernmental and inter-institutional relations.

MAYORAL COMMITTEE

The primary functions of the Mayoral Committee, are to render assistance to the Executive Mayor in exercising of his/her authority. To identify the needs of the Municipality; review and evaluate those needs in order or priority. To recommend to the Municipal Council strategies, programmes and services to address priority needs through the Integrated Development Plan and estimated revenue and expenditure taking into account any applicable National and Provincial development plan; and recommend or determine the best methods including partnership and other approaches to deliver those strategies, programmes and services to the maximum benefit of the Community. Mayoral committee is appointed by the Executive Mayor and dissolve if the Executive Mayor ceases to hold.





CLLR N.S XABA
SPEAKER



ALDERWOMAN P.T SIBEKO
WHIP OF COUNCIL



CLLR M.A NZIMANDE
MPAC CHAIRPERSON

SPEAKER

In terms of Section 37 of the Municipal Structure Act as amended the functions.

The speaker of a municipal council:

- presides at meetings of the council;
- performs the duties and exercises the powers delegated to the speaker in terms of section 32;
- must ensure that the council meets at least quarterly.
- must maintain order during meetings:
- must ensure compliance in the council and Council committees with the Code of Conduct set out in Schedule 5: and
- must ensure that council meetings are conducted in accordance with the rules and orders of the council.

WHIP

In terms of Section 41B of the Municipal Structure Act as amended the functions of the Whip of a municipal council:

- liaises with the different political parties to ensure representation in council and council committees;
- maintains sound relations between the various political parties;
- informs the whips of all parties on important matters on the council agenda;
- assists the speaker to count votes in the council meeting;
- facilitates the interaction between the executive and legislative oversight structures in the municipality; and
- resolves disputes between the speaker, mayor or executive mayor, or members of the mayoral committee.

MUNICIPAL PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE (MPAC)

In terms of Section 79A Subsection (3) of the Municipal Structure Act. The municipal council must determine the functions of the municipal public accounts committee, which must include the following:

- review the Auditor-General's reports and comments of the management committee and the audit committee and make recommendations to the municipal council.
- review internal audit reports together with comments from the management committee and the audit committee and make recommendations to the municipal council;
- initiate and develop the oversight report on annual reports contemplated in section 129 of the Local Government: Municipal Finance Management Act;
- attend to and make recommendations to the municipal council on any matter referred to it by the municipal council, executive committee, a committee of the council, a member of this committee, a councillor and the municipal manager; and
- on its own initiative, subject to the direction of the municipal council, investigate and report to the municipal council on any matter affecting the municipality.

(4) Reports of the municipal public accounts committee must be submitted to the speaker who must table such reports in the next meeting of the municipal council.





Municipal Manager Mr. M Kunene

M Msukaligwa Local Municipality entered the first quarter of the 2025/2026 financial year with a renewed commitment to strengthening revenue enhancement as the backbone of sustainable service delivery. Reliable revenue ensures that the municipality can invest in infrastructure, maintain services, and respond to the growing needs of our communities.

Revenue enhancement is not just a financial exercise, it is a collective responsibility that directly affects the quality of life in our municipality. With rising demands on essential services and the need to expand infrastructure, it has become necessary to intensify efforts to ensure that every rand due to the municipality is collected, while also protecting our most vulnerable households.

To this end, we have rolled out key programmes including the Debt Rehabilitation Campaign and the Indigent Programme.

DEBT REHABILITATION CAMPAIGN: As at 31 September 2025, the programme assisted individual account holders and businesses in settling outstanding municipal accounts. Residents paid overdue balances amounting to approximately R4,000,000, representing 40% of residential debt. Fifteen (15) businesses, representing about 10%-15% percent of business accounts in arrears, also settled their balances. The initiative strengthens municipal revenue, promotes responsible payment, and supports service delivery.

INDIGENT PROGRAMME: Indigent Programme: As at 30 September 2025, a total of 5,304 households were registered under the Indigent Programme, ensuring qualifying families continue to receive uninterrupted access to basic services such as water, sanitation, and electricity.

We acknowledge that these are challenging economic times for many households and businesses. Rising costs and financial pressures are a reality, but it is in these very times that partnership and cooperation become most important. By making use of the programmes available,

residents can ease their financial burden while contributing to a stronger, more sustainable Municipality.

Msukaligwa Local Municipality assures residents that every cent collected is reinvested into delivering services, maintaining infrastructure, and creating a sustainable future for our communities

These initiatives are not only about recovering funds owed but also about creating fairness, responsibility, and sustainability. They offer practical solutions while encouraging a stronger payment culture across the Municipality.

Msukaligwa Local Municipality assures residents that every cent collected is reinvested into delivering services, maintaining infrastructure, and creating a sustainable future for our communities. Looking ahead, the municipality will continue to strengthen these programmes, while also exploring new approaches such as increased community awareness campaigns, the use of digital payment systems, and partnerships with stakeholders to make compliance easier and more transparent.

Together, let us make this first quarter the foundation of a year where Msukaligwa becomes financially sustainable, service-oriented, and inclusive for all.





MR. M KUNENE
MUNICIPAL MANAGER



MR. MS DLAMINI
DIRECTOR:
CORPORATE SERVICES



MR. FC MATHEBULA
ACT. DIRECTOR: PLANNING &
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



MR. K NHLABATHI
DIRECTOR:
FINANCE / CFO



MS. PZ DUMA
DIRECTOR:
TECHNICAL SERVICES



MR MS LUKHELE
DIRECTOR: COMMUNITY
& SOCIAL SERVICES

MUNICIPAL MANAGER: OFFICE OF THE MUNICIPAL MANAGER

The purpose of the Office of the Municipal Manager is "To coordinate and manage the provision of service delivery in accordance with the legislation governing local government." and the functions are as follows:

- Manage technical services;
- Coordinate the provision of community services;
- Coordinate municipal planning and economic development;
- Manage financial matters;
- Manage corporate services;
- Manage communication, IGR and contact centre services;
- Render internal audit services;
- Render risk management services;
- Manage organisational performance management system; and
- Manage and coordinate the provision of municipal services in the service delivery units.

DIRECTOR: COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL SERVICES

The purpose of the Department is "To coordinate the provision of community services" and the functions are as follows:

- Render disaster, security management and law enforcement services;
- Coordinate waste management and environmental services;
- Coordinate the maintenance of parks, sports and cemeteries;
- Render traffic management services;
- Render fire management services; and
- Render library and information services.

DIRECTOR: CORPORATE SERVICES

The purpose of the department is "To manage corporate services" and the functions are as follows:

- Render human resource management and development services;
- Render legal services;
- Render secretariat and records management services;
- Render vehicle and plant mechanical services;
- Manage information and communication technology services;
- Manage fleet services;
- Provide maintenance to municipal buildings;

DIRECTOR (CFO): FINANCE

The purpose of the department is "To manage financial matters" and the functions are as follows:

- Manage municipal budget and financial reporting;
- Manage municipal assets and insurance;
- Manage expenditure services;
- Render supply chain management services; and
- Render revenue, credit control and cash management services

DIRECTOR: PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The purpose of the department is "To coordinate municipal planning and economic development" and the functions are as follows:

- Render spatial planning and land use management services;
- Render sustainable and integrated human settlements planning and property management; and
- Promote local economic development services.
- Manage integrated development planning

DIRECTOR: TECHNICAL SERVICES

The purpose of the department is "To manage technical services" and the functions are as follows:

- Manage municipal infrastructure development programmes;
- Manage roads and storm water services;
- Manage water and sanitation services; and
- Render electricity services.



Participate, Influence, Transform: Msukaligwa's 2025/26 IDP Dialogue with Communities

Msukaligwa Local Municipality remains committed to inclusive, transparent, and participatory governance. As part of this commitment, the Municipality has been conducting Integrated Development Plan (IDP) consultation meetings across all 19 wards in the municipal area for the 2025/26 financial year. These sessions, which include both in-person and virtual meetings, provide residents with an opportunity to engage directly with the Municipality, share their perspectives, and influence the planning and prioritization of services in their communities.

The IDP is a living plan that reflects the needs, aspirations, and contributions of the community.

The Integrated Development Plan (IDP) is a strategic framework that guides the Municipality's development, service delivery, and budget allocation over a five-year period. It outlines the Municipality's priorities, objectives, and projects while ensuring alignment with national and provincial development strategies. The IDP is a living plan that reflects the needs, aspirations, and contributions of the community. Public participation is a legal requirement in the formulation and review of the IDP, ensuring that the voices of residents directly shape municipal decisions.

The consultative programme began on 10 September 2025 and will conclude on 7 October 2025, covering all 19 wards of Msukaligwa. Each

ward is hosting its own session, tailored to the unique challenges and opportunities within that community. Residents have actively participated in these dialogues, voicing concerns about infrastructure, basic service delivery, safety, sanitation, economic development and social welfare. Recognising that some community members prefer to attend meetings from home, the Municipality is set to conduct virtual IDP consultations, ensuring accessibility and broader participation.

Every ward in Msukaligwa has its own set of priorities and challenges. Some wards may need improved water and sanitation infrastructure, while others may require interventions in electricity, roads, or youth development. The consultation process allows the Municipality to capture the unique needs of each community, integrate them into the IDP, and allocate resources efficiently. By participating, residents play a direct role in shaping the development trajectory of their wards and the municipality. The Municipal Council is currently in the process of reviewing the IDP for the 2026/2027 financial year, using the inputs gathered from these consultative meetings. The feedback from residents will inform project planning, budget prioritisation, and service delivery improvements. This ongoing cycle of consultation, planning, and implementation ensures that the Municipality remains responsive, accountable, and aligned with the developmental needs of its communities.

The IDP consultation programme is the foundation of participatory democracy in Msukaligwa. It reflects the Municipality's commitment to transparent governance, inclusive planning, and collaborative development. Residents are encouraged to continue engaging with their Ward Councillors and municipal officials, ensuring that their voices contribute meaningfully to the shared vision of a prosperous, well-served, and empowered Msukaligwa.



THE KWAZANELE, BREYTEN IDP CONSULTATIVE MEETING LED BY CLLR Z.E. ZULU OF WARD 14.



CLLR T.J. MADUNA ENGAGED RESIDENTS DURING THE IDP CONSULTATIVE MEETING HELD IN WARD 4.



WARD 3 RESIDENTS EAGERLY TOOK PART IN THE IDP CONSULTATIVE MEETING LED BY CLLR T.J. MADUNA.

G20 TOURISM OUTREACH

Msukaligwa Steps into the Spotlight for Inclusive Tourism

The G20 Tourism Outreach Programme arrived in Msukaligwa Local Municipality on 31 July 2025, highlighting a region with rich tourism offerings and showcasing the importance of inclusive, community-led tourism. Held at the Msukaligwa Civic Centre, the event was led by Deputy Minister of Tourism, Ms Makhotso “Maggie” Soty, under the national theme: “Championing an Inclusive and Resilient Tourism Development.”

This initiative is part of South Africa’s commitment to the G20 Global Tourism Framework, recognising tourism as a powerful driver of sustainable development, particularly in rural towns where local ownership and community participation are vital. Joining the Deputy Minister were Executive Mayor of Msukaligwa Local Municipality, Alderman M.P. Nkosi, and Executive Mayor of Gert Sibande District Municipality, Councillor Walter Mngomezulu. Both played key roles in mobilising stakeholders and emphasising the importance of local government in steering tourism growth from the ground up.

It demonstrated how inclusive tourism can take root when local leadership is supported by national strategy and when communities are not just included but empowered.

The day began with a closed briefing session for senior government officials, while community members explored a vibrant exhibition outside. Local tourism businesses showcased the area’s creativity and entrepreneurial spirit, with handcrafted beadwork, cultural storytelling

experiences, township cuisine, eco-homestays, and heritage-inspired products all featured prominently. One exhibitor, a local maker of fascinators, shared her excitement: “Today I felt seen. Having leaders stop and ask about my business gave me hope. We’re not just surviving anymore. We’re being included.” Her words captured the spirit of the event: recognition and empowerment for the community.

Inside the hall, the Msukaligwa Local Municipality Choir welcomed guests with uplifting harmonies. In her opening remarks, Executive Mayor Nkosi spoke of the municipality’s vision to make tourism a key part of its economic development strategy. “Msukaligwa is not only a place of history and culture,” she said. “It’s a living tourism asset. This outreach is about placing our people at the centre of that story.” She highlighted the municipality’s ongoing support for small businesses, collaboration with cultural groups, and efforts to use heritage to position Msukaligwa as a meaningful destination.

Delivering the keynote address, Deputy Minister Soty stressed the importance of equitable tourism that benefits local communities. She noted that towns like Msukaligwa play a vital role in the national tourism landscape and should have access to funding, skills training, and development opportunities. She also highlighted initiatives such as the Tourism Monitors Programme, Tourist Guiding Training, and TVET college partnerships designed to empower youth, women, and people with disabilities. “Tourism must speak the language of inclusion,” she said. “Communities must lead in shaping tourism where they live.”

After the formal programme, residents engaged in an open dialogue with officials during a Q&A session addressing real concerns. Questions ranged from infrastructure needs and marketing support to youth involvement and funding access. A tourism entrepreneur from Davel reflected on the experience: “As a young woman in tourism, I’ve often felt invisible. But today, I felt heard. The leaders didn’t just present; they engaged.”

In his closing remarks, Executive Mayor Mngomezulu of Gert Sibande District Municipality praised the collaboration between all levels of government and the energy of local participants. “When national, district, and local stakeholders walk together with our communities, real transformation is possible. Tourism is not just about travel; it’s about pride, ownership, and shared growth.”

The G20 Tourism Outreach in Msukaligwa went beyond ceremony. It demonstrated how inclusive tourism thrives when local leadership is supported by national strategy, and when communities are not just included but empowered. With renewed momentum, visible government commitment, and entrepreneurs leading the way, Msukaligwa is stepping forward on its own terms, a shining example of community-driven tourism development in South Africa.



[IN PHOTOS]



67 Minutes of Service: Msukaligwa Honours Madiba's Legacy

In Msukaligwa, the strength of a community is measured by how it cares for its most vulnerable members, especially senior citizens. Elders stand as living libraries of wisdom, keepers of heritage, and pillars upon which families and communities are built. Ensuring their wellbeing is not just an act of kindness, but a moral duty that defines the values of a caring society. Guided by values of care and selfless service, Msukaligwa Local Municipality joined the world on 18 July 2025 to mark Nelson Mandela International Day, a day dedicated to making a difference in the lives of others.

"What counts in life is not the mere fact that we have lived. It is what difference we have made to the lives of others." – Nelson Mandela

In that spirit, The Executive Mayor, Alderwoman Mapulane Nkosi welcomed Mpumalanga Premier Mr Mandla Ndlovu, and together they pledged 67 minutes of service for the community, matching Mandela's 67 years of public service. The provincial theme for 2025 was "It's still in our hands to combat poverty and inequality," and the day's activities embodied this call to action through hands-on service.

The first session took place at Autumn Ridge (Ward 8, Ermelo). The Premier and the Executive Mayor rolled up their sleeves to patch potholes on local roads. Working with the Department of Public Works and the municipal Roads and Stormwater team, they resurfaced about 3,548 m² of roadway (1,418 m² on Outer Street plus 2,130 m² on four inner lanes). Their participation demonstrated leadership by example, working side by side with road crews to improve road safety for residents.

Later that afternoon at the Civic Centre (Msukaligwa Main Hall), the focus shifted to the Msukaligwa's seniors. 950 (Nine hundred and fifty) warm blankets were distributed to elderly residents, with 50 (fifty) blankets allocated to each of the 19 wards to help them through the winter season. The ceremony also featured a Mandela-themed birthday cake, which the Premier and the Mayor cut and shared with the elders as a symbolic celebration of Madiba's life. During the event, a heartfelt moment unfolded when an elderly resident in urgent need of a wheelchair was identified.

Demonstrating compassion, the Executive Mayor promptly organized and donated a wheelchair, ensuring that the senior could regain dignity and mobility on this special day. These gestures captured the day's message of compassion and community support.

Guided by values of care and selfless service, Msukaligwa Local Municipality joined the world on 18 July 2025 to mark Nelson Mandela International Day

Globally, Nelson Mandela International Day (July 18) was formally declared by the United Nations in 2009 and has been observed each year on Mandela's birthday since then. The initiative is designed to honor Mandela's legacy through volunteerism and community service, and its campaign slogan explicitly reminds community members that "Nelson Mandela has fought for social justice for 67 years. We're asking you to start with 67 minutes." By 2025 the 67-minute service tradition had been carried out 16 times, each year encouraging people to turn Mandela's values into action. This year's provincial theme, "It's still in our hands to combat poverty and inequality," reflected the idea that local initiatives must help solve social challenges. Premier Ndlovu noted that these collective efforts "reaffirm the commitment to humanitarian service and to advance the values of justice, dignity and compassion which Mandela stood for."

In the words of Mandela himself, the significance of life is measured by "the difference we have made to the lives of others." This Mandela Day in Msukaligwa was a powerful example of that principle in action, as local leaders and citizens worked together to uplift their community.



EXECUTIVE MAYOR ALDERWOMAN M.P. NKOSI (LEFT) AND MPUMALANGA PREMIER MR. M. NDLOVU (RIGHT) WALK THROUGH AUTUMN RIDGE, WHERE THEY DEDICATED 67 MINUTES TO PATCHING POTHOLES AND RESURFACING SECTIONS OF THE ROAD IN HONOUR OF MANDELA DAY



Service Delivery in Action: Ward 16 Mayoral Imbizo Strengthens Community Voice



FLTR (BACK): ALDERWOMAN PT SIBEKO WHIP OF COUNCIL, CLLR SE NGOVENE MMC OF COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL SERVICES, CLLR NS XABA SPEAKER, ALDERWOMAN MP NKOSI EXECUTIVE MAYOR. FLTR (FRONT): ELDERLY COMMUNITY MEMBERS FROM WARD 16, EXT 32-34, WHO RECEIVED FOOD PARCELS.

The Ward 16, Ext. 32 Sports Ground was alive with energy as the Msukaligwa Local Municipality hosted its Ward 16 Mayoral Imbizo. Led by Executive Mayor Alderwoman M.P. Nkosi, the event brought together residents, municipal leadership, sector departments, contractors, and stakeholders for dialogue, service delivery, and community engagement.

The day began at the Council Chamber with a briefing led by Municipal Manager Mr. M. Kunene, attended by political and administrative leadership, contractors, and representatives from Social Services, Home Affairs, Sports, Arts and Culture, Public Works, COGTA, Agriculture, Employment and Labour, Education, Health, Land Affairs, Economic Development and Tourism, SAPS, and SASSA. Ward 16 Councillor Cllr P.H. Sibiya said, "Our community feels heard when leaders take time to sit with us and follow through with real action."

An Imbizo is not just an event, it is a commitment. Today, we are here to listen, share, and act.

At the sports ground, the Msukaligwa Choir opened with uplifting songs that set a tone of unity and celebration. Residents clapped and sang along, showing the strong community spirit.

The Imbizo gave residents the chance to speak directly to government. Sector representatives highlighted their commitment to improving services

in Ward 16. SAPS addressed safety concerns, with Captain M. Dlamini saying, "Safety is the foundation of service delivery. We are here not only to enforce the law but to work with the community to prevent crime and protect our youth."

Adding to the spirit of service delivery in action, the programme also included the project handover of the Rehabilitation of Extension 32, 33, 34 Taxi Collector Street (Ring Road). In addition, the municipality announced and introduced the appointed contractor who will be upgrading the sewer reticulation network servicing Extensions 32, 33, and 34 in Ermelo.

Executive Mayor Nkosi delivered the keynote address, stressing that service delivery is a shared responsibility. "An Imbizo is not just an event, it is a commitment. Today, we are here to listen, share, and act. Together with our partners and the community of Ward 16, we will build a municipality that provides not only services, but also hope and opportunity," she said.

Community members raised concerns and suggestions on housing, employment, service reliability, and youth opportunities. One community member said, "It means so much to be heard directly by our leaders. Sometimes we only see government from a distance, but today they were here, face to face, listening. That gives us hope."

The day ended with practical support: 70 food parcels and seeds were handed to residents, and cleaning tools were given to Lucky Dube School and the Community Works Programme to support safe and dignified learning and work environments.

From the choir's performance to the mayor's keynote, the project handover, the contractor announcement, and the community dialogue, the Ward 16 Mayoral Imbizo showed that when leadership, government departments, and communities work together, progress is real and visible.

[IN PHOTOS]



KwaZanele Road Resurfacing Brings Relief to Breyten Community

On 16 September 2025, the Executive Mayor of Msukaligwa Local Municipality, Alderwoman Mapulane Nkosi, together with the District Executive Mayor of Gert Sibande District Municipality, Councillor Walter Mngomezulu, handed over the newly resurfaced municipal road from Breyten Clinic to Siyazi Primary School in KwaZanele, Breyten.

The 935-metre street, once riddled with potholes and rubble, has been repaired and brought up to proper road and drainage standards. At 5.5 metres wide, the work was completed in just five working days, causing little disruption to residents.

connects to the R36 provincial road leading to Breyten, Ermelo, and Carolina. During the handover, both mayors highlighted how the project will make daily travel easier, improve access to the clinic and schools, and most importantly, give Siyazi learners a safer route to and from school. Community members expressed their relief and gratitude, saying the improvement ends years of frustration with the damaged road.

The project also created short-term work opportunities, showing the municipality's commitment to ensuring that local development benefits residents directly. Speaking at the event, Alderwoman Nkosi encouraged the community to help look after the new road, pointing out that its lifespan depends on both municipal care and responsible use.

She noted two issues that need attention. First, stormwater drains must be kept clear of waste and rubble, as blockages increase flooding risks and damage the road. It was found that some residents had been discarding rubbish into the drains, which weakens the system. Second, residents were asked not to drill holes into the tarred surface when putting up tents for events, as this allows water to seep in and causes potholes to form.

"The Municipality has done its part by resurfacing this important road. Now we call on the community to help keep it in good condition for many years to come," said Alderwoman Nkosi.

The handover marked more than just the opening of a road. It was also a reminder that when the municipality and the community work together, lasting improvements can be made to the lives of residents.

The Municipality has done its part by resurfacing this important road. Now we call on the community to help keep it in good condition for many years to come

The upgraded road provides a safer, more direct link between Siyazi Primary School and the main entrance to KwaZanele township, which



EXECUTIVE MAYOR ALDERWOMAN M.P. NKOSI (LEFT) AND DISTRICT EXECUTIVE MAYOR CLLR W. MNGOMEZULU (RIGHT) DURING AN INSPECTION OF THE NEWLY RESURFACED ROAD LEADING TO SIYAZI PRIMARY SCHOOL.



Empowering Youth Through Mpumalanga Tourism Youth Fund Outreach

Msukaligwa Local Municipality (MLM) continues to strengthen its efforts to equip young people with opportunities that can shape their future. On Tuesday, 26 August 2025, the municipality supported National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) during their Mpumalanga Tourism Youth Fund outreach session at main town hall at the Civic Centre in Ermelo, where aspiring entrepreneurs gathered in numbers to gain insight into business support and funding opportunities within the tourism sector.

Municipal leaders stressed that while not everyone may have submitted an application in time for the 2025 cycle, the knowledge shared during the outreach equips participants to prepare for future opportunities and to refine their entrepreneurial ideas.

The interactive platform gave them the chance to ask questions directly and receive practical advice.

The Mpumalanga Tourism Youth Fund was introduced in September 2024 by the NYDA, in partnership with the Mpumalanga Department of Economic Development and Tourism (DEDET). Backed by a three-year agreement worth R6 million annually, shared equally by both partners, the fund was designed to empower young entrepreneurs, stimulate innovation, and create jobs, particularly in rural and underdeveloped parts of the province.

The session also emphasised the strategic importance of tourism in MLM. The municipality is home to a wealth of attractions that present fertile ground for youth-led ventures. Chrissiesmeer, known as the “Lake District” of South Africa, offers eco-tourism potential with its birdlife and scenic wetlands. Lothair and surrounding forests are ideal for adventure tourism, while Ermelo’s cultural heritage sites, including rock art and historical landmarks, provide opportunities for community-based and heritage tourism. The municipality’s rural landscapes and farming communities also hold scope for agro-tourism initiatives.

The outreach session in Ermelo was one of several held across local municipalities in the province to ensure accessibility and awareness. Officials from NYDA and DEDET provided guidance on how to prepare strong business proposals, meet compliance requirements, and develop sustainable enterprises. For many young participants, it was their first exposure to structured information on funding and entrepreneurship in tourism, and the interactive platform gave them the chance to ask questions directly and receive practical advice.

MLM reaffirmed its commitment to youth development by lending its support and its involvement ensured that local youth were informed and encouraged to view tourism as a viable path for economic participation.

These resources position MLM as more than a host of the outreach session - it is a natural tourism destination where young people can establish businesses that celebrate local heritage while creating jobs.



Widows Find a Voice as Msukaligwa Launches Empowerment Forum

Msukaligwa Local Municipality (MLM) launched the Msukaligwa Widow's Forum, a structured platform to empower widows, improve access to services, and strengthen representation at local level. Facilitated by the Department of Social Development (DSD), the initiative forms part of a broader provincial programme in Mpumalanga aimed at supporting widows and ensuring their inclusion in socio-economic development.

widows' experience stigma, isolation, and emotional distress in addition to economic and legal challenges. The forum intends to strengthen peer support networks and work with counselling services to provide a holistic response. This ensures that empowerment is not narrowly defined but instead addresses both the social and emotional needs of widows.

MLM and its partners committed to linking widows with training opportunities, business development support, and funding channels.

The launch, attended by widows from across Msukaligwa, provided a platform to elect representatives from each of the seven towns under the municipality. These representatives will serve as a collective voice, helping to ensure widows' concerns are raised and addressed in municipal and provincial decision-making structures. The move marks a significant step in giving widows formal recognition and a mechanism to influence policies that affect their lives.

In her address, Speaker of Council at the GSDM, Cllr. BG Sekhonde, emphasised the importance of structured engagement: "The Msukaligwa Widow's Forum will not only support individuals but will also help us plan better. We can design programmes that are relevant, targeted, and sustainable by hearing directly from widows."

Officials from the Gert Sibande District Municipality (GSDM), the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA), and the Department of Co-operative Governance, Human Settlements and Traditional Affairs (CoGHSTA), represented by local Community Development Workers (CDWs), were also in attendance. Their presence was key to providing guidance and outlining support available within their respective portfolios. This collaborative approach reinforced the message that widows' challenges cannot be addressed in isolation but require coordination across government and community structures.

The launch concluded with a commitment to regular meetings, capacity-building sessions, and partnerships with civil society. Planned activities include workshops on financial management, health awareness drives, and participation in community development projects.

The programme highlighted several priorities for the forum. Legal empowerment remains central, as many widows struggle with inheritance disputes, guardianship issues, and lack of clarity on property rights. Economic empowerment was also addressed as a cornerstone of the initiative. MLM and its partners committed to linking widows with training opportunities, business development support, and funding channels. The forum aims to reduce dependency and promote sustainable livelihoods by equipping widows with financial literacy and entrepreneurial skills.

Through this initiative, MLM and its partners have created a foundation for widows to organise, access resources, and advocate for their rights. The launch signals a move from sporadic interventions to a coordinated, inclusive platform that promotes dignity, representation, and independence. It also positions the forum as a model for MLM to strengthen vulnerable groups within broader provincial and national development agendas.

Equally important was the focus on psychosocial well-being. Many



THIS INITIATIVE FORMS PART OF A BROADER PROVINCIAL PROGRAMME IN MPUMALANGA AIMED AT SUPPORTING WIDOWS AND ENSURING THEIR INCLUSION IN SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.





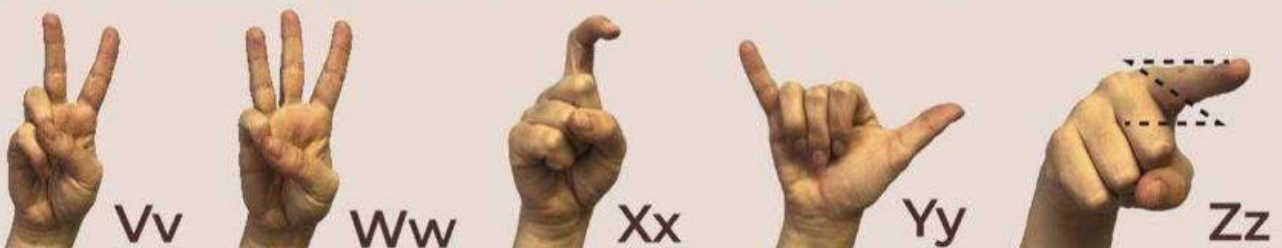
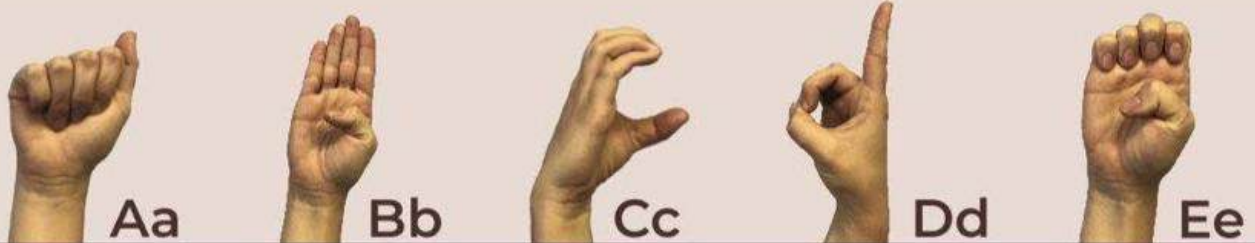
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Celebrating Life and Vitality as Seniors Citizens Shine at the Golden Games

The AJ Swanepoel Stadium in Ermelo was the venue for the regional leg of the Age-in-Action Active Ageing Programme, also known as the Golden Games. Older persons from across the municipality gathered to take part in a day of sport and wellness activities.

The programme was facilitated by the Department of Social Development in partnership with the Department of Health and the Department of Community Safety and Recreation. It forms part of the Mpumalanga Older Person's Forum, which promotes the wellbeing and participation of older citizens in community life.

Competitions on the day included track and field, ball games and group exercises. These events encouraged participants to stay active while also giving them the chance to enjoy teamwork and friendly competition. The atmosphere was lively, with seniors showing energy and commitment in each event.

A key purpose of the games was to select a team that will represent Msukaligwa at the district and provincial Golden Games. The chosen participants will compete against other regions of Mpumalanga, carrying the municipality's flag into the next stage of the programme.

Alongside the sporting activities, departments offered services and information. Health screenings and wellness advice were provided. This made the event not only a sporting platform but also an opportunity to connect participants with resources that support healthy and safe ageing. The Golden Games highlight the importance of keeping older persons active, both physically and socially. The programme helps reduce isolation

and strengthens community ties by offering structured opportunities for exercise and participation. It also shows respect for older citizens by recognising their contribution and ensuring they remain visible in public life.

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Officials from the Department of Social Development stressed that the programme supports broader plans for active ageing in the province. For Msukaligwa Local Municipality, hosting the event confirmed its role in supporting inclusive community programmes. The selection of a team for the provincial games was a proud moment, but equally important was the message that older persons remain a vital part of society.

The regional leg of the Golden Games at AJ Swanepoel Stadium was a reminder that ageing does not mean stepping back from life. With the right support, older citizens can remain active, healthy and engaged, continuing to inspire their families and communities.



A Celebration of Sport and Wellness at SAMWA Games

Msukaligwa Local Municipality (MLM) proudly hosted the South African Municipal Wellness Association (SAMWA) Games at several venues in Ermelo, including AJ Swanepoel Stadium and the Sport Inn. The two-day event brought together municipal employees from across Mpumalanga to compete in various sporting codes and take part in wellness activities that helped build teamwork, boost morale and support overall wellbeing.

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The games were officially opened with a song from the MLM choir, followed by the Executive Mayor, Alderwoman MP Nkosi, offering well wishes to all participants.

“As we come together for these games, I urge you all to support our local businesses selling here at the venues. This event is not only about sport and wellness but also about providing a much-needed economic boost to the town of Ermelo,” Nkosi said.

Teams took part in darts, pool, tennis, volleyball, tug of war, soccer and netball. Throughout the games, players showed determination, discipline and good teamwork.

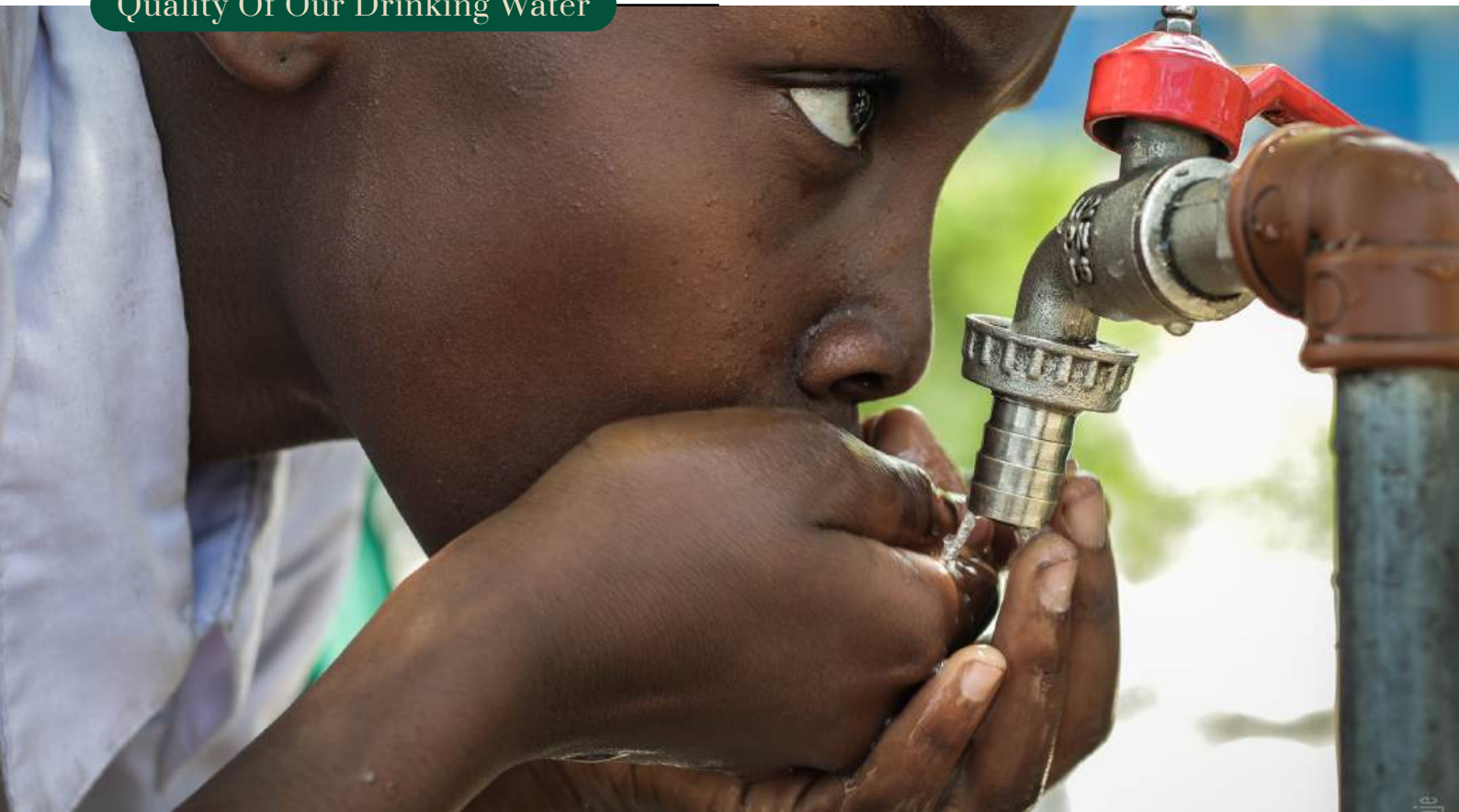
However, the event was about more than just sport. Service providers such as Old Mutual, Ford Motors, Excel Properties and several medical aid companies offered valuable information and support on mental health, financial wellbeing, property solutions and healthcare. These stalls gave participants a chance to engage directly with professionals and access services relevant to their everyday lives.

Local vendors also contributed to the event by offering food, crafts and services, which helped support the local economy and added to the overall atmosphere of the gathering. Day 1 saw enthusiastic competition across all sports, with teams eager to set the pace early. Matches were marked by focused play and sportsmanship, creating a vibrant atmosphere. Wellness stalls drew steady interest, allowing participants to access valuable support and advice throughout the day.

Day 2 built on this momentum with heightened energy and determination. The final matches delivered thrilling moments as teams pushed to secure victories. The ongoing wellness activities remained a key feature, reinforcing the event's core approach. As the games concluded, awards and recognition highlighted outstanding performances, teamwork and dedication. This reaffirmed the value of such gatherings in encouraging healthy habits and strengthening bonds across municipalities.

The SAMWA Games are an important way to promote wellness, build relationships between municipalities and recognise the hard work of municipal employees. Combining sport, wellness activities and community support helped employees stay healthy in body, mind and finances - so they can better serve their communities.





Quality of our drinking water

This report indicates an overview of water quality status for the past 3 months (i.e. July to September 2025) across Msukaligwa local municipality jurisdiction area. The report is generated from the monthly water results received from Gert Sibande District Municipality water quality laboratory.

Msukaligwa local municipality serves as the water service authority (WSA) as well as water service provider (WSP). The municipality provides access to clean water for the communities within its jurisdiction in accordance with the Constitution of the republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996, the municipal structures (Act 117 Of 1998).

Approximately 35% of the population of Msukaligwa local Municipality reside in rural areas (farms or villages). The municipality uses both the internal and external expertise and capacity to provide water services to the communities within the six supply schemes, namely Ermelo/Wesselton scheme, Davel/kwaDela scheme, Breyten/kwaZanele & Chrissiesmeer/kwaChibikhulu scheme, Lothair scheme, Sheepmoor scheme and rural scheme.

ERMELO/WESSELTON SCHEME

The Ermelo water supply scheme abstracts raw water from Jericho, Douglas and Brummer Dams for the treatment in two water treatment works namely Southern treatment plant (Jericho Dam) at 13 Mega litres per day and Northern treatment plant (Douglas Dam & Brummer Dam) at 14 Mega litres per day with a combined capacity of 27 Mega litres per day and distributed to 155 351 of the populations which covers areas like the whole of Ermelo.

BREYTEN/KWAZANELE & CHRISSIESMEER/KWACHIBIKHULU SCHEME

The Breyten/kwaZanele & Chrissiesmeer/kwaChibikhulu scheme water supply scheme abstracts raw water from the Torbanite dam and Usutu – transfer pipeline via the upper Komati pipeline for treatment in Breyten treatment work with a design capacity of 3 Mega litres per day and distributed to a population of over 26 177 in Breyten / kwaZanele and Chrissiesmeer / KwaChibikhulu.

DAVEL/KWADELA SCHEME

The Jericho scheme/Usutu pipeline water supply scheme abstracts raw water from the Jericho dam for treatment in Davel water treatment plant with a design capacity of 1 Mega litres per day and distributed to a population of 5 711 in Davel and kwaDela.

LOTHAIR SCHEME

The Lothair water supply scheme abstracts raw water from Impuluzi River for the treatment in capacity of 1 Mega litre per day and distributed to over 8 435 population in Slindile and Lothair.

SHEEPMOOR SCHEME

The Sheepmoor scheme abstracts raw water from Jericho dam for the treatment in Sheepmoor water treatment works with the capacity of 1 Mega litre per day distributed a population of 3 886. RURAL SCHEME Drinking water is provided to farms and villages through the maintenance and operation of over 100 boreholes and 8 water tankers for fifty-two farms and villages.

RURAL SCHEME

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WATER LABORATORY IN USE

Water samples are collected by Gert Sibande District laboratory samplers for analysis once a month at all our water treatment plants to be tested at their accredited laboratory. The results are then sent to the municipality to be analysed by the technician & water quality supervisor for compliance SANS 241: 2015.

WATER QUALITY PARAMETERS

The following Water quality parameters are taken into consideration when analysing the quality of drinking water: Microbiological properties (presence of bacteria, viruses and pathogens); Physical properties (conductivity, PH and turbidity) Chemical properties (fluoride, chloride, nitrate, sulphate, iron, manganese, dissolves salts, metals etc.)

WATER QUALITY OVERVIEW

During the 3 months period from July - September 2025, 245 water samples were taken. The samples were taken from different locations of water supply schemes which include the treatment works, reservoirs, household's taps, schools and boreholes, etc. 245 analyses were done from those samples to determine physical, chemical and microbiological compliance of final water.

Month	No. of samples	Chemical failures	Percentage chemical compliance	Microbial failures	Percentage microbial compliance
July	80	7	91%	17	79%
August	83	4	95%	16	81%
September	82	5	94%	19	77%

No. of samples	245 samples and/or represent
Microbial failures	52
Chemical failures	16

52 (Fifty two) samples (Microbial) points failed to comply with class 1 SANS 241: 2015 and thus equated to 79% compliant.

16 (sixteen) samples (Chemical) points failed to comply with class 1 SANS 241: 2015 and thus equated to 93% compliant.

CONCLUSION

The municipality remains committed in safeguarding public health through continuously and consistently monitoring of drinking water quality.

The municipality is confident about the quality of drinking water supply at each and every tap. Clean and drinkable water in line with SANS 241:2015 the municipality will ensure the following:

- That all unacceptable sample result at various points will be monitored weekly until they improve.
- Gert Sibande District Municipality will take samples once every month for all water treatment plants to be analysed at their accredited laboratory.





THE PHOENIX

The rebuilding of Ermelo after the destruction of almost all buildings during the 1899 to 1902 war.



THE UNIFORMED BLACK AND WHITE TRIANGLES

The mining and coal industry in the immediately vicinity of Greater Ermelo and the integration of the two towns.



THE CROSSED SHOVEL AND SHEEP SHEARS

Representing the two most important farming operations - horticulture and sheep farming.



THE MOTTO

"Stabiliter Progrediens" which means stable progress.