



Public Statement and Press Release

29 April 2020

President Ramaphosa
Lindiwe Sisulu, Minister of Human Settlements, Water and Sanitation
National Rapid Response Task Team
Disaster Management Command Structure

Regarding: Water Stressed Communities

On the 16th April the South African Food Sovereignty Campaign and its allies issued our first report (available here: <https://www.safsc.org.za/public-statement-and-press-release-water-stressed-communities/>) on water stressed communities, based on our online community reporting tool. We reported on water stress in 19 communities: 12 in the Eastern Cape, 1 in Gauteng, 2 in Limpopo, 2 in Kwazulu-Natal, 1 in the Western Cape and 1 in the Free State that require urgent attention. We provided details in the report. We have not received a response from the Minister on the water needs of these communities and our demands.

Today we are reporting on another 28 communities: 14 in the Eastern Cape, 12 in Limpopo, 1 in KZN and 1 in the Western Cape. It is apparent from reported information the Eastern Cape and Limpopo communities have been in the grip of drought, mismanagement and corruption. This has lasted for years. Many communities are forced to use limited household incomes to buy water. Keeping clean and sanitized, during Covid-19, is proving to be difficult. Communities are extremely desperate and have tried to continue coordinating efforts to meet community water needs. This was certainly the case in the coastal region of Centane, in the Eastern Cape, when community leaders were arrested.

In Lutzville, in the Western Cape, unscrupulous farmers seem to have extracted huge amounts of water from the Clan William Dam, leaving communities in a desperate situation.

In KZN, the reported community of Eziqhazeni-Nazaretha is extremely desperate and has tried various communication channels to reach government but with no success.

The Nelson Mandela Bay Metro has also been flagged as a water stressed area through our online monitoring tool. Media reports have highlighted that most dams are less than 20% full. Political in-fighting, ineffective leadership during the drought and a lack of planning have hampered attempts to meet the needs of communities. Water leaks in the Metro, estimated at 46% of water supply are also a major challenge.

Details on the water crisis in each community are available as an annexure to this statement.

Based on this report our demands are as follows:

1. Withdrawal of charges against ten leaders from Coastal Links and members of the Inyanda rural movement, who were arrested on 14th April when they convened to discuss how to meet the water needs of their coastal communities (600 households in the coastal region of Centane), in the context of Covid-19. They will be appearing in the Centane Magistrates Court on the 13th May, 2020.
2. In Lutzville, the Minister needs to investigate the theft of water by farmers from the Clan William Dam and a proper water commons sharing arrangement needs to be put in place that prioritises the needs of communities. The communities rights to water must be affirmed as per the constitution and in accordance with the water laws in the country.
3. Both Eastern Cape and Limpopo communities need to be treated as drought disaster areas. We want this declared by the Minister. Small scale farmers need to be given urgent support to ensure farming continues. This includes startup capital, support for agro-ecological farming and food relief packages. Households need boreholes repaired or sunk, in some instances. The Nelson Mandela Bay Metro needs to be assisted to ensure it does not end up with a 'Day Zero' situation. We do believe repairing water leaks, ensuring state provisioning and regulated use of boreholes for communities and re-use (recycling) of water are some of the urgent measures that need to be considered. Moreover, long term water planning needs to be locked into place to ensure water harvesting at household, street and enterprise level is in place and there is just sharing of water resources.
4. All reported communities need water tanks delivered to them. We want this prioritised and we need a regular schedule made available to the public on when water tanks will be replenished;
5. All communities reported do not have access to water in nearby schools. As you promised, we want schools made available for water provisioning, under public health guidelines;
6. The Minister's calls to local governments not to be punitive with water supply is not being heeded. A stronger message has to be sent to local government to ensure uninterrupted water supply. In our current report this applies particularly to the community of Ezizhazeni-Nazareth, in KZN;
7. Many problems are also institutional related to weak water governance. There are major water infrastructure backlogs in several communities. Beyond immediate water relief through water tanks, schools and boreholes, we want the Minister to announce on measures and timelines to address these backlogs.

For further information, contact:

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Annexure: List of water affected communities, as listed on the *Water Stressed Community Map* on the safsc.org.za website:

	1. What is the name of your community/ village?	2. Province	3. How long have you been experiencing water stress?	4. Explain the issues to us in Detail
47	Nelson Mandela Bay	Eastern Cape	Two years	The drought in the Eastern Cape has depleted the water supply for the Nelson Mandela Metro as a whole.
46	Mashashane Matlapa	Limpopo	Since the lockdown	Before the lockdown were able to buy water in the community but since the lockdown the water truck come once
45	Dabane	Eastern Cape, ZA	The community of Dabane, Eastern Cape, has been without water since 2017 - for three years.	
44	Lutzville	Western Cape	We receive water from the Clan William dam through a water canal. The area experience little rainfall and temperature raise above 45 degree Celsius. We are under water restrictions since 2018	The majority of land is for Agriculture that use a lot of water. After grape harvesting the department of Water and Sanitation put pressure on households to safe water. These activities by farmers and wine cellars bring down the level of the water in the Clan William dam. The illegal extraction of water by commercial farmers are not monitored by government
43	Lorraine	Limpopo, ZA	The village of Lorraine, Limpopo, has been suffering from a 4 year drought, mismanagement and fraud which has left almost Zero access to municipal water. They have been without water for 5-7 years. Community members have to buy household and drinking water.	
42	The Oaks	Limpopo, ZA	The village of The Oaks, Limpopo, has been suffering from a 4 year drought, mismanagement and fraud which has left almost Zero access to municipal water. They have been without water for	

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			5-7 years. Community members have to buy household and drinking water.	
41	Finale	Limpopo, ZA	The village of Finale, Limpopo, has been suffering from a 4 year drought, mismanagement and fraud which has left almost Zero access to municipal water. They have been without water for 5-7 years. Community members have to buy household and drinking water.	
40	Worcester	Limpopo, ZA	The village of Worcester, Limpopo, has been suffering from a 4 year drought, mismanagement and fraud which has left almost Zero access to municipal water. They have been without water for 5-7 years. Community members have to buy household and drinking water.	
39	Madeira	Limpopo, ZA	The community of Madeira, Limpopo, has been suffering from a 4 year drought, mismanagement and fraud which has left almost Zero access to municipal water. They have been without water for 5-7 years. Community members have to buy household and drinking water.	
38	Ga-Mametja	Limpopo, ZA	The community of Ga-Mametja, Limpopo, has been suffering from a 4 year drought, mismanagement and fraud which has left almost Zero access to municipal water. They have been without water for 5-7 years. Community members have to buy household and drinking water.	

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37	Botshabelo	Limpopo, ZA	The community of Botshabelo, Limpopo, has been suffering from a 4 year drought, mismanagement and fraud which has left almost Zero access to municipal water. They have been without water for 5-7 years. Community members have to buy household and drinking water.	
36	Sedawa	Limpopo, ZA	The community of Sedawa, Limpopo, has been suffering from a 4 year drought, mismanagement and fraud which has left almost Zero access to municipal water. They have been without water for 5-7 years. Community members have to buy household and drinking water.	
35	The Willows	Limpopo, ZA	The community of The Willows in Limpopo, has been suffering from a 4 year drought, mismanagement and fraud which has left almost Zero access to municipal water. They have been without water for 5-7 years. Community members have to buy household and drinking water.	
34	Turkey	Limpopo, ZA	The Village of Turkey in Limpopo has been suffering from a 4 year drought, mismanagement and fraud which has left almost Zero access to municipal water. They have been without water for 5-7 years. Community members have to buy household and drinking water.	
33	Nyeleni District	Eastern Cape, ZA	The community of Nyeleni District, in Peddie, Eastern Cape, has been without water since 2017	
32	Qeto	Eastern Cape, ZA	The community of Qeto Location, Eastern Cape, has been without water since 2017	

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31	Mission	Eastern Cape, ZA	The community of Mission, Eastern Cape, has been without water since 2017, for 3 years.	
30	Lujiko	Eastern Cape, ZA	The community of Lujiko, Eastern Cape, has been without water since 2017, for 3 years	
29	Mtati	Eastern Cape, ZA	The community of Mtati has been without water for 3 years, since 2017	
28	Mgababa	Eastern Cape, ZA	The community of Mgababa has been without water since 2017, for three years	
27	Prudhoe	Eastern Cape, ZA	The community of Prudhoe, Eastern Cape has been without water since 2017, for three years.	
26	Bell	Eastern Cape, ZA	The community of Bell, Eastern Cape has been without water since 2017 (for 3 years)	
25	Wesley	Eastern Cape, ZA	The community of Wesley, Eastern Cape has been without water since 2017 (for three years)	
24	Gcinisa	Eastern Cape, ZA	The community of Gcinisa, Eastern Cape, has been without water for 3 years since 2017	
23	Benton	Eastern Cape, ZA	The community of Benton, Eastern Cape, has been without water for 3 years, since 2017	
22	Ngqowa	Eastern Cape, ZA	The community of Ngqowa has been without water for 3 years	
21	Tiyani	Limpopo	The village has not had constant water supply for the past 10 years but this year has been worse. Community members are now resorting to washing their clothes in the nearby river.	Community members have to buy water from those with boreholes. However, during to covid19 those with boreholes are saving the water for themselves and this leaves villagers like my elderly parents without water.

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20	Eziqhazeni-Nazaretha	KwaZulu Natal	-/+ 5 years	We have infrastructure which has been dry for past -/+5 years. I have reported to Presidency,KZN Office of the Premier and Umzinyathi District. Last resort earlier this year, was Umzinyathi District sending Uthukela Water to investigate of which they went AWOL after that. I am willing to share my communications(emails) and phone calls record with govt officials in trying to solve this.
19	Xilinx Village	Eastern Cape	It has been a year now	We've been getting water from Xilinx Dam into Community taps but they has been closed for a whole year from February 2020.Because o drought.But we haven't been supplied with any help eversince
18	Hamakuya	Limpopo	Water crisis is stress everyday, its even waste during this COVID-19 period	The communal borehole is broken and community are collecting water from the Langwe river.
17	makhushoaneng, dithabaneng and Makweng	Limpopo, Capricorn District, Lepelle nkumpi local municipality	Water crisis is stress everyday, its even waste during this COVID-19 period	We have municipality water tanks and pipes closer our homesteads, and some of the tapes are communal. Water comes twice a week in other areas its not even scheduled. We wait at the tape for hours or days queuing for water to come out. Some times we go back home without water in our containers. Its a crisis, but those who have oqn boreholes are surviving without stress.
16	Machibini	KwaZulu Natal	Since 2015, tap water ran for 2 days in May 2017 but disappeared entirely up to this day.	We have had no running tap water for over 5 years. Most residents of Machibini cannot afford JoJo tanks and for those who can, their rainwater is contaminated by coal dust from the Somkhele Mine. In July 2019, there was a protest for water in Machibini where 29 women were arrested. Umkhanyakude District Municipality allocated R17

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				million for the water crisis, but nothing has been done in Machibini since their promise date which was August 2019.
15	Ndakeni maqgabasini Bhukuveni malanda and Dinda	Eastern Cape	For years I was born in the area I'm now 34 no taps were ever installed there no jojo tanks were ever provide for the community	People are sharing water from the small revers with animals and it is not safe because they travel long distances to get water from the stream and now the little they have is running out and people are now getting sicknesses because they using darty water that they sharing with animals to drink and kooking they have no choice because they can't find any water anywhere it's very terrifying people are living in such bad conditions
14	Manyiseni	KZN	7 year	We have no source of water except rivers and wells that we are sharing with animals. Boholes have been not working for more than 5 years, no one repairs them
13	Phuthaditjhaba, QwaQwa	Free State	6 months + with zero running water. About 5 years of intermittent cuts, up to a month long at a time.	For the past 5 years we have had water stress with intermittent cuts on a daily or weekly basis, but occasionally lasting many days or weeks. Last November, water stopped running entirely. By January, civil unrest broke out with riots, looting and a shutdown of the entire area. A steering committee and government funding were allocated but no action to date. Last week we got news that due to covid19 we would be getting water today (April 7th) but nothing has happened. Now news is updated that only some areas (hospitals, cbd and industrial area) will be getting water with the majority of residents still cut

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				off. More disturbing is the lack of clear information about what the cause of the water cuts actually is as we have several dams including sterckfontein in the vicinity.
12	Merweville	Western Cape	The Western Cape Karoo is an arid to a semi-desert region in South Africa. Winter in the Karoo has always been a time of relative drought whilst summer was the wet season. And even though humidity in summer was low, there was always random rain that came in the form of dramatic storms. This is no longer the case since the Western Cape Karoo is experiencing the most severe drought ever recorded.	Most dams have already run completely dry, leaving communities totally dependent on underground water. Borehole levels have dropped to an alarming capacity of less than 20% or are completely depleted in some areas.
11	Diepsloot	Gauteng	2 years	Little and far fetched government water in isolated tap systems
10	Graaff-Reinet - 6280	Eastern Cape	The Eastern Cape Karoo is an arid to a semi-desert region in South Africa. Winter in the Eastern Cape Karoo has always been a time of relative drought whilst summer was the wet season. And even though humidity in summer was low, there was always random rain that came in the form of dramatic storms. This is no longer the case since we have been experiencing persistent drought since 2015.	We are experiencing the most severe drought ever recorded. The drought has been described as "the worst drought in a thousand years". Most dams have already run completely dry, leaving communities totally dependent on underground water. Borehole levels have dropped to an alarming capacity of less than 20% or are completely depleted in some areas. Despite recent rainfall, borehole and dam levels remain critically low.

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9	Aberdeen - 6270	Eastern Cape	The Eastern Cape Karoo is an arid to a semi-desert region in South Africa. Winter in the Eastern Cape Karoo has always been a time of relative drought whilst summer was the wet season. And even though humidity in summer was low, there was always random rain that came in the form of dramatic storms. This is no longer the case since we have been experiencing persistent drought since 2015.	We are experiencing the most severe drought ever recorded. The drought has been described as "the worst drought in a thousand years". Most dams have already run completely dry, leaving communities totally dependent on underground water. Borehole levels have dropped to an alarming capacity of less than 20% or are completely depleted in some areas. Despite recent rainfall, borehole and dam levels remain critically low.
8	Nieu Bethesda - 6286	Eastern Cape	The Eastern Cape Karoo is an arid to a semi-desert region in South Africa. Winter in the Eastern Cape Karoo has always been a time of relative drought whilst summer was the wet season. And even though humidity in summer was low, there was always random rain that came in the form of dramatic storms. This is no longer the case since we have been experiencing persistent drought since 2015.	We are experiencing the most severe drought ever recorded. The drought has been described as "the worst drought in a thousand years". Most dams have already run completely dry, leaving communities totally dependent on underground water. Borehole levels have dropped to an alarming capacity of less than 20% or are completely depleted in some areas. Despite recent rainfall, borehole and dam levels remain critically low.
7	Jansenville - 6265	Eastern Cape	The Eastern Cape Karoo is an arid to a semi-desert region in South Africa. Winter in the Eastern Cape Karoo has always been a time of relative drought whilst summer was the wet season. And even though humidity in summer was low, there was always random rain that came in the form of dramatic storms. This is no longer the case since we have been experiencing persistent drought since 2015.	We are experiencing the most severe drought ever recorded. The drought has been described as "the worst drought in a thousand years". Most dams have already run completely dry, leaving communities totally dependent on underground water. Borehole levels have dropped to an alarming capacity of less than 20% or are completely depleted in some areas. Despite recent rainfall, borehole and dam levels remain critically low.

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6	Waterford - 6265	Eastern Cape	The Eastern Cape Karoo is an arid to a semi-desert region in South Africa. Winter in the Eastern Cape Karoo has always been a time of relative drought whilst summer was the wet season. And even though humidity in summer was low, there was always random rain that came in the form of dramatic storms. This is no longer the case since we have been experiencing persistent drought since 2015.	We are experiencing the most severe drought ever recorded. The drought has been described as "the worst drought in a thousand years". Most dams have already run completely dry, leaving communities totally dependent on underground water. Borehole levels have dropped to an alarming capacity of less than 20% or are completely depleted in some areas. Despite recent rainfall, borehole and dam levels remain critically low.
5	Klipplaat - 6255	Eastern Cape	The Eastern Cape Karoo is an arid to a semi-desert region in South Africa. Winter in the Eastern Cape Karoo has always been a time of relative drought whilst summer was the wet season. And even though humidity in summer was low, there was always random rain that came in the form of dramatic storms. This is no longer the case since we have been experiencing persistent drought since 2015.	We are experiencing the most severe drought ever recorded. The drought has been described as "the worst drought in a thousand years". Most dams have already run completely dry, leaving communities totally dependent on underground water. Borehole levels have dropped to an alarming capacity of less than 20% or are completely depleted in some areas. Despite recent rainfall, borehole and dam levels remain critically low.
4	Steytlerville - 6250	Eastern Cape	The Eastern Cape Karoo is an arid to a semi-desert region in South Africa. Winter in the Eastern Cape Karoo has always been a time of relative drought whilst summer was the wet season. And even though humidity in summer was low, there was always random rain that came in the form of dramatic storms. This is no longer the case since we have been experiencing persistent drought since 2015.	We are experiencing the most severe drought ever recorded. The drought has been described as "the worst drought in a thousand years". Most dams have already run completely dry, leaving communities totally dependent on underground water. Borehole levels have dropped to an alarming capacity of less than 20% or are completely depleted in some areas. Despite recent rainfall, borehole and dam levels remain critically low.

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3	Willowmore - 6445	Eastern Cape	The Eastern Cape Karoo is an arid to a semi-desert region in South Africa. Winter in the Eastern Cape Karoo has always been a time of relative drought whilst summer was the wet season. And even though humidity in summer was low, there was always random rain that came in the form of dramatic storms. This is no longer the case since we have been experiencing persistent drought since 2015.	We are experiencing the most severe drought ever recorded. The drought has been described as "the worst drought in a thousand years". Most dams have already run completely dry, leaving communities totally dependent on underground water. Borehole levels have dropped to an alarming capacity of less than 20% or are completely depleted in some areas. Despite recent rainfall, borehole and dam levels remain critically low.
2	Rietbron - 6450"		The Eastern Cape Karoo is an arid to a semi-desert region in South Africa. Winter in the Eastern Cape Karoo has always been a time of relative drought whilst summer was the wet season. And even though humidity in summer was low, there was always random rain that came in the form of dramatic storms. This is no longer the case since we have been experiencing persistent drought since 2015.	We are experiencing the most severe drought ever recorded. The drought has been described as "the worst drought in a thousand years". Most dams have already run completely dry, leaving communities totally dependent on underground water. Borehole levels have dropped to an alarming capacity of less than 20% or are completely depleted in some areas. Despite recent rainfall, borehole and dam levels remain critically low.
1	Mthokwane	Eastern cape	More than 2 years	There are taps but due to the drought they run dry most times of the year. Forced to use unclean water from low levelled rivers which maybe not safe to drink.