

MPUMALANGA PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT

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Department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs

Litiko
Lekubusa
ngekubambisana
netebuholi bendzabuko

Department van
Korporatiewe Regering
en Tradisionele Sake

umNyango
wezekuBusa
ngokuHlanganyela
neeNdaba zamaKhosi

MEDIA RELEASE

MPUMALANGA PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT ADDRESSING FLOODS IMPACT

The Department of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs in conjunction with other sector departments and Ehlanzeni municipalities (Nkomazi, Bushbuckridge, Thaba Chweu, Mbombela and Umjindi) have been conducting intense technical assessments on the effects of floods. Heavy rains impacted on river flows and dam levels which resulted in the closure of low lying bridges, roads and localized flooding.

A Joint Operation Committee was established on 18 January 2012 to compile a comprehensive report. The report indicates that 1452 households were affected but 330 households were mostly affected. The initial reported number of 2 people who died has now increased to six.

The assessment report indicates that a total of 118 schools were inaccessible whilst 111 schools have been damaged as result of heavy rains and floods. The Department of Public Works Roads and Transports and the affected municipalities have begun clearing the access roads to the schools to make them accessible. The Department of Education will be providing mobile classrooms to some affected schools. The Department is still verifying these numbers, the cost of the damage and determining the type of intervention for those affected schools.

A total of 112 sites have been affected by infrastructural damage to bridges, culverts, patching, slip failure, erosion and regraveling. The Department of Public Works has started repairing these.

The water levels in the rivers and dams have decreased, however communities are warned that they still remain extremely dangerous and they should avoid crossing these rivers.

Relief aid in a form of food parcels, blankets and tents have been delivered to all affected households within the Ehlanzeni District. Water tankers are supplying water to areas where water supply is interrupted. To improve the drinking water safety residents have also been supplied with chloro floc sachets to purify the water. Residents are informed that this water is for free and they must not be made to pay for it.

The Department of Human Settlement will conduct an assessment of the damaged houses to determine what assistance can be provided to the affected households through the Emergency Disaster Housing fund.

The Department of Health is monitoring the situation for any outbreaks of waterborne diseases in all municipalities and residents are being advised / taught on health promotion measures. Clinics that were affected by water logging at entrances are now accessible after being cleared.

All municipalities through their Joint Operation Committees have developed intervention plans to further address all challenges created by heavy rains and floods. The Provincial Disaster Management Centre is in contact with the National Disaster Management Centre regarding the declaration of disaster and interventions.

The South African Weather Service has issued a warning of more heavy rains from 25 January 2012. The Provincial and Local Joint Operation Committees are also on high alert for the expected heavy rains.

Parents are urged to warn children not to play next to streams and rivers. A special caution is issued to all learners who cross bridges and rivers on their way to school because water levels are still high in most areas.

In the event of possible flooding communities must call the Department's Disaster toll free number 0800202507.

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