

Chief Directorate: Media Liaison and National and Provincial Communication

KZN FLOODS Communications Update and Plans

28 APRIL 2022

Elijah Mhlanga



The Purpose of the Report

To give an update on the work done up to now and to share plans to be implemented by the Communication Chief Directorate to support the Department of Education in KwaZulu-Natal

Introduction

- **The province has experienced adverse weather conditions that resulted in flooding and damage of various infrastructure. The heavy rains started from the 10th April 2022.**
- **Amongst the various affected infrastructure are the education facilities (schools) in various districts.**
- **The districts have submitted reports of 630 affected schools, 101 inaccessible schools, 124 extensively damaged.**
- **64 deceased learners, 1 educator, 1 food handler**
- **The Province has reported various damages to roads, bridges and other infrastructure which poses a challenge when attempting to assess schools to conduct other technical assessments.**



The Role of DBE Communication in the KZN disaster

- To provide strategic communications support
- To enhance technical communication advise
- To provide additional human resources
- To assist amplify messages in the public domain via media platforms.
- To obtain information that DBE needed for a broader intervention in support of the province.
- To provide crisis communication expertise.

DBE Communication Approach

- The DBE Communications has for years established a communication planning and execution platform with KZN Education Department communication team.
- The platform became useful when the crisis resulting from the floods took place.
- The DBE Communications Unit through the channel created with KZN Education obtained information on the floods in KZN.
- Updates were received accompanied by images showing the extent of the damage in various schools in the province.
- The MEC and HOD with District Directors started visiting schools reported to be affected in the heavy rains.

Crisis Communication Approach

DBE and KZN DOE agreed to apply a crisis communication approach in respect of the floods;

- **Principals are the Messengers in Chief!**
- **The Communications Unit is the driver of strategy and activities.**
- **Proactive – be the first to share information about the disaster and how it affects us.**
- **Regular Updates – issue daily communication either via media statement or digital posters, circular**
- **Rapid Response - Respond swiftly and be visible on the scene.**
- **Always On – be available at all times to give information to the media.**
- **Coherence – speak from the same script.**

Disaster Communication

- In keeping with the crisis communication principles, a safety alert warning was issued on the **11 April 2022**, a day after the heavy rains. School communities were advised to use their discretion based on the circumstances in their own areas.



Kwazi Mshengu

I have directed the HoD to issue a circular and statement advising schools in areas affected...
m.facebook.com

https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=10224062020990581&id=1001055504&sfnsn=scwspwa

21:13

SAFETY ALERT

Attention to all school principals and School Governing Bodies:

Due to inclement weather conditions, the Department of Education in KZN advises teachers, parents and caregivers to use their discretion whether or not to send their children to school tomorrow
12 APRIL 2022.

The Department will monitor weather patterns and give further advice in this regard.

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 kzndoe

 @kzn_education

 @dbe_kzn

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TOGETHER



Disaster Communication

- In keeping with the crisis communication principles, a media statement was issued on the **13 April 2022 to all schools** communities were informing about the closure of schools due to the floods.



Media Statement

To: All Media

Embargoed: For immediate release

Wednesday, 13 April 2022

FLOODS FORCES SCHOOLS TO CLOSE IN KWAZULU-NATAL

The Department of Education in KwaZulu-Natal wishes to inform school communities and all education stakeholders that it has temporarily closed all schools that have been affected by massive flooding of heavy downpours and inflows of water that has been taking place in the last few days in KwaZulu-Natal.

The strong flooding has caused a huge disruption and it continues to impact negatively on teaching and learning at schools, while it remains a threat to the lives of pupils as well as teachers. The terrain and level of water has made it extremely difficult for teachers and pupils to reach the schools.

At some areas it is extremely dangerous to access schools as pupils and teachers are forced to cross high levels of water. We have therefore decided to provisionally close down all affected schools until Tuesday, 19 April 2022 as we continue to monitor the situation across the province.

In the meantime, we are in the process of developing contingency plans to mitigate the impact of the floods and provide short-term measures while the water hopefully subsides.

To this end, we urge parents/guardians to cooperate with the school authorities and continuously monitor the levels of the water in their respective areas. We remain firm in our resolve to protect learners and teachers at all material times.

End/

ISSUED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION IN KWAZULU-NATAL

GROWING KWAZULU-NATAL TOGETHER

Issued by the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education

Media enquiries:

Mr Muzi Mahlabi: Head of Communication; Mr Kwazi Mthethwa: Media Liaison Officer; Mr Shile Mlotshwa: Media Relations Manager
+27 82 519 1420 +27 78 264 6165 +27 72 207 2018

Disaster Communication

- In keeping with the crisis communication principles, a media statement was issued on the **13 April 2022 to all schools** communities were informing about the visit of the MEC to affected areas in Umgungundlovu district.



Media Alert

To: All Media

Embargoed: For immediate release

Tuesday, 13 April 2022

MEC Mshengu to visit PMB schools after devastating storms.

The MEC for Education in KwaZulu-Natal, Mr Kwazi Mshengu will tomorrow, Thursday, 14 April 2022 visit schools in KwaZulu-Natal following floods that not only forced the Department to close more than 500 schools, but also claimed the lives of learners.

MEC Mshengu will visit Willowfontein Combined School, Ikusasehle High School and Funulwazi Primary School, all under the Umgungundlovu District.

The details of the visit are as follows:

Venue: Willowfontein Combined School

Date: 14 April 2022

Time: 07H30

The Media is invited to cover the MEC's visit.

End/

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Visit to Flood Affected Schools

- On **14 April** the DBE joined MEC Mshengu and HOD Ngcobo on two separate visits to witness some of the damage in the schools in the midlands of KZN.



Disaster Communication

- In keeping with the crisis communication principles, a media statement was issued on the **14 April 2022** in which the **Minister expressed her condolences** following the devastation of the heavy rains and the lives lost.

MEDIA RELEASE

14 APRIL 2022

BASIC EDUCATION MINISTER CONVEYS CONDOLENCES TO AFFECTED FAMILIES IN KWAZULU-NATAL FLOODS

The Minister of Basic Education, Mrs Angie Motshekga, has expressed her sincere condolences and sympathy to all the families who have lost their loved ones in the heavy rains in KwaZulu-Natal.

The latest reports indicate that 306 people have lost their lives in the widespread floods that affected various areas in the province.

Minister Motshekga said that by Wednesday afternoon 18 learners and one educator had been reported to have perished in the disaster that occurred.

"We are saddened that so many lives have been lost and we would like to express our deepest condolences to all affected families and relatives. It is such a tragic loss and our prayers go out to those who have lost their family members and those who lost their belongings," said Minister Motshekga.

The floods have forced the Department of Education in the province to close schools until next week as more than 120 have been reported to be damaged.

"This is a catastrophe and the damage is unprecedented. What is even more worrying is that more rain is expected in the same areas that are already affected," Minister Motshekga said. The province has now been declared a provincial disaster.

The Department of Basic Education has sent a team of senior managers to support the provincial education department in conducting an assessment of the damage caused. The Minister will visit the province soon.

The DBE will collaborate with the Department of Education in KZN together with other departments and stakeholders to assist affected families.

The Department of Education in the province had already suffered from recent storms which caused extensive damage to more than 200 schools. KZN Education MEC Kwazi Mshengu said that the province has now more than 500 schools that are damaged and require urgent attention.

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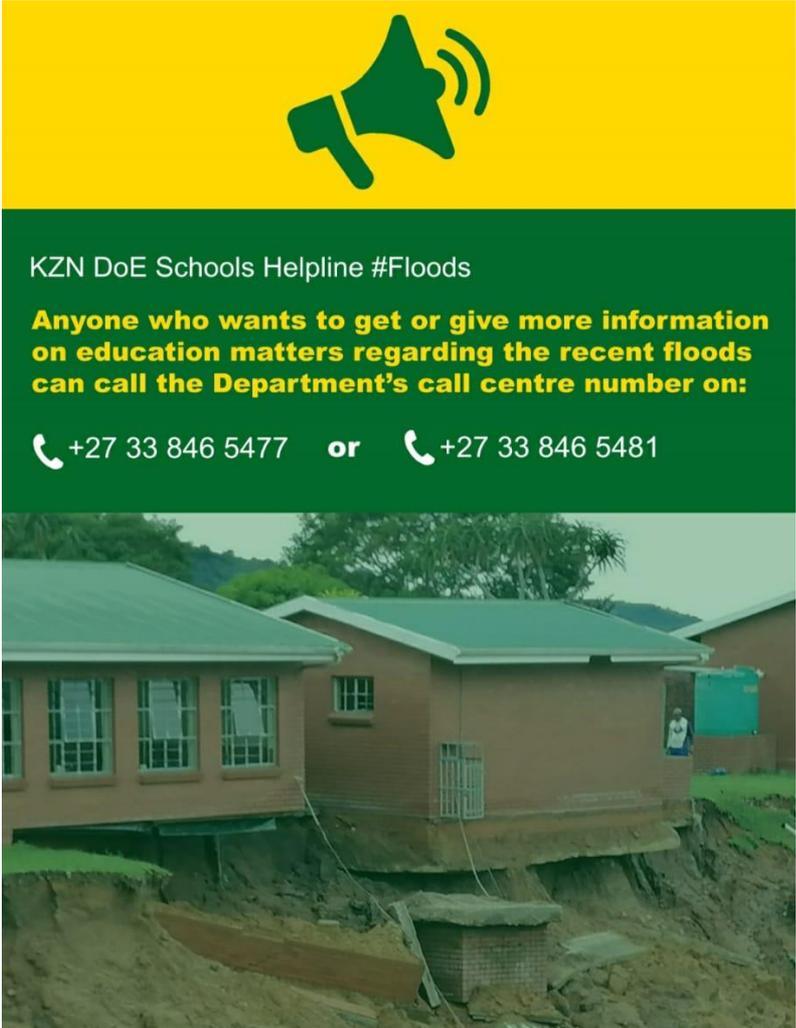
Media Enquiries:

Elijah Mhlanga - Head of Communication: 083 580 8275 | Hope Mokgathe - Spokesperson to Minister: 079 817 0427
Terence Khala - Media Liaison Officer: 081 758 1546



The Role of the Call-Centre

- In keeping with the principles of crisis communication the public were informed to use the call-centre number to report any matters to the Department



KZN DoE Schools Helpline #Floods

Anyone who wants to get or give more information on education matters regarding the recent floods can call the Department's call centre number on:

+27 33 846 5477 or +27 33 846 5481



DISASTER RESPONSE TEAM

- The MEC established a Disaster Response Team lead by HOD Ngcobo comprising all DDGs, Chief Directors, Directors and District Directors.
- The DBE through the KZN Communication Unit was invited to be part of the meetings.
- The first meeting took place on the 15 April 2022 virtually.
- The purpose of the meetings were to obtain reports and updates on the situation and to determine the response and relief sought in the different areas.
- The Communication teams benefitted a immensely from these meetings and well-equipped to proactively communicate publicly.

Communication Activities

- In the days that followed media coverage intensified and DBE and KZN communicated together and the messages were synchronized;
- In this interview the focus was on the extent of the damage and the assistance being given to affected people



» 16 April 2022

Communication Activities

- In the days that followed media coverage intensified and DBE and KZN communicated together and the messages were synchronized; in this interview the focus was on measures being put in place to mitigate against the impact of the floods



» 24 April 2022

Disaster Communication

- In keeping with the crisis communication principles, a media advisory was issued on the **18 April 2022** invite media to accompany the Minister and MEC as they visited schools.

MEDIA RELEASE

18 APRIL 2022

**BASIC EDUCATION MINISTER ANGIE MOTSHEKGA TO VISIT
KWAZULU-NATAL ON TUESDAY**

The Minister of Basic Education, Mrs Angie Motshekga, will visit KwaZulu-Natal on Tuesday to assess the extent of the damage caused by the floods and to meet with the provincial education department.

Minister Motshekga together with KZN Education MEC Kwazi Mshengu accompanied by senior officials will visit affected schools in the various districts. At the last count 630 schools were affected, 101 inaccessible and 124 have suffered extensive damage.

It has been reported that 57 learners have been confirmed to be deceased while 5 are still missing. Rescue and recovery processes are still ongoing. One educator and one food handler have also been reported to have passed away.

The media is invited as follows:

Date: 19 April 2022
Venue: Dokkies, 321 ZK Matthews Road, Umbilo, Durban
Time: 8:30am

Media Enquiries:

Elijah Mhlanga - 083 580 8275 (DBE)
Muzi Mahlambi - 082 519 1420 (KZN DOE)

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Read to Lead
A Reading Nation is a Leading Nation



STAY
SAFE
SAFELY THROUGH THE CHALLENGES

Minister's Visit to KZN Day 1

BRIEFING FOR
THE
MINISTER OF BASIC EDUCATION
19 APRIL 2022



Minister Motshekga was briefed ahead of her visit to the schools together with MEC Mshengu. The session took place at Dokkies in Glenwood, Durban

Minister's Visit to KZN Day 1



Minister Motshekga held several briefing sessions and countless interviews with media on site. The visits were covered live by all TV news channels and radio news as well as digital and print media outlets.

Minister's Visit to KZN Day 1



Minister Mantsheke visited schools where displaced learners were accommodated days after the floods.

Minister's Visit to KZN Day 2



The Minister and MEC used an SAPS helicopter to flyover the areas where there were inaccessible schools.

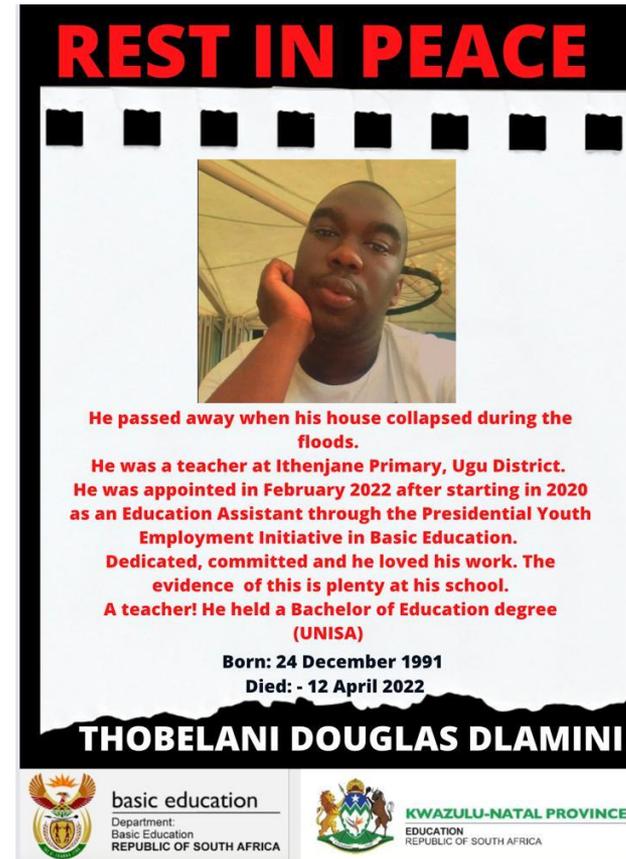
Minister's Visit to KZN Day 2



The Minister and MEC visited the school where the one educator passed away in the floods when his house collapsed on him.

Condolences Message

Following the visit to the schools, this message was disseminated to position the Department as caring and sympathetic during this time.



REST IN PEACE



He passed away when his house collapsed during the floods.

He was a teacher at Ithenjane Primary, Ugu District. He was appointed in February 2022 after starting in 2020 as an Education Assistant through the Presidential Youth Employment Initiative in Basic Education.

Dedicated, committed and he loved his work. The evidence of this is plenty at his school.

A teacher! He held a Bachelor of Education degree (UNISA)

**Born: 24 December 1991
Died: - 12 April 2022**

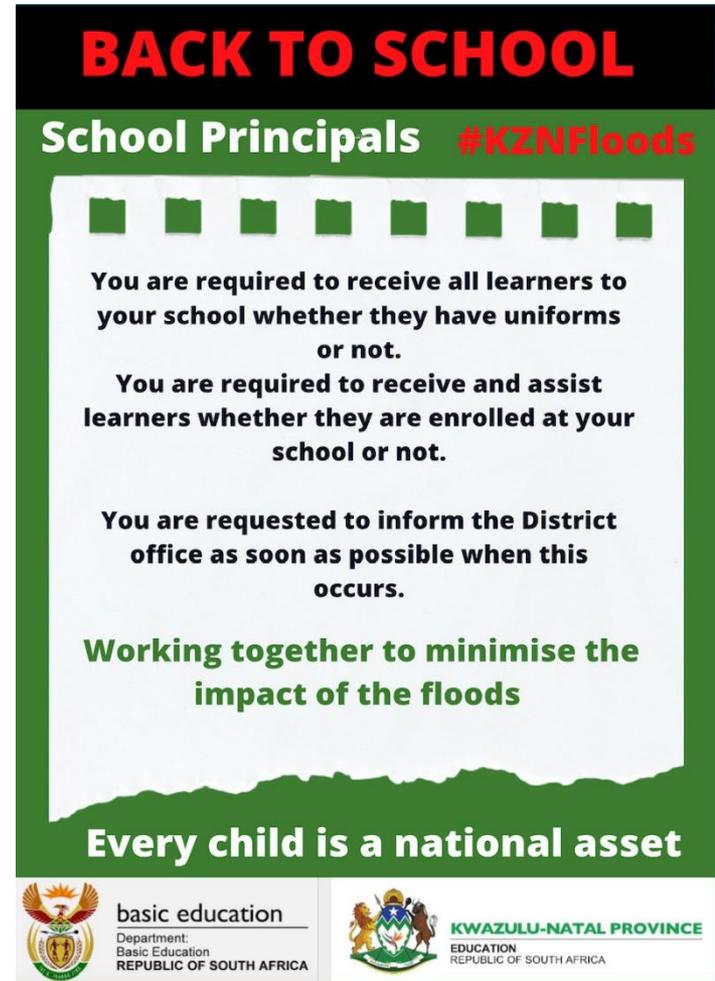
THOBELANI DOUGLAS DLAMINI

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Communication Activities

- The Communication Team utilized various strategies to communicate with the public.
- This poster generated interest and promoted media interviews as well.



Communication Activities

- In the days that followed media coverage intensified and DBE and KZN communicated together and the messages were synchronized;



Communication Support ECD Team

- The Communications Unit also provided support to the ECD Team that descended on KZN on 21 April 2022.
- The purpose of the visit was to assess damage to ECD centres in the affected areas. The visit was scheduled for 2 days in the Umlazi and Pinetown Districts.



Disaster Communication

- In keeping with the crisis communication principles, a media statement was issued with the information broken down into infographics which were circulated widely. Media interviews followed as a result of these

BACK TO SCHOOL
Learner Material #KZNfloods

The provision of learning and teaching support material (LTSM) to all floods-affected schools has been prioritized. We have identified 268 learners in need of LTSM as they have lost these during the recent floods.

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BACK TO SCHOOL
Learner Transport #KZNfloods

Due to the recent floods, the provision of learner transport has been affected in 34 schools.

A total of 39 school buses and 18 minibuses has not been able to operate due to amongst other things, muddy roads, badly damaged roads, and collapsed bridges.

Many vehicles are expected to return to operation as soon as the ground hardens. Some vehicles are already using alternative routes to reach schools..

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BACK TO SCHOOL
Curriculum Recovery #KZNfloods

All affected schools will provide comprehensive services to recover learning losses and to promote wellbeing. Affected learners will receive support to catch up on lost learning. Teachers will be supported to address learning losses among their learners and to incorporate digital technology into their teaching.

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BACK TO SCHOOL
Psycho-social Support #KZNfloods

Working with our sister Department of Social Development we are already providing professional therapy to affected learners and educators as part of government interventions. The disasters especially, floods have a huge impact in all spheres of life including psychological, social and educational and its effects may persist for life long if not intervened properly.

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SOCIAL CLUSTER MEDIA BRIEFING: 28 April 2022



SOCIAL CLUSTER MEDIA BRIEFING



THE PERFORMANCE OF DBE MEDIA PLATFORMS



Communication Plans

The DBE-KZNDOE Communications team will continue to implement a communication effort that seeks to position the Department and the entire sector as a caring, supporting and indeed responsive.

- **Mobile Classrooms** : the Team will profile the delivery of mobile classrooms in the affected schools.
- **Curriculum Recovery Plan** – outline and explain the implementation of the recovery plan. Quantify learning losses.
- **Funerals**: The Department will continue to send representatives to the funeral services of the learners.
- **The team will update on the progress of the construction of the refurbishment of the different schools.**
- **Site Visits**: These must continue as families their loved ones still missing.
- **Infographics**: These are convenient as they provide up to date information which is consumable and easy to understand.
- **Delivery**: The next step is to showcase the

Participation in KZN Floods Interventions

- NATJOINTS – Communication participates and presents in the NATJOCOM ON KZN Floods as per the invitation of DBE Security Services.
- KZN Relief - DBE Task Team
- KZN Response Team
- The Communications team has been to KZN twice with the second visit lasting 5 days. This was done to obtain greater insight on what is taking place in the province.

Conclusion

- The Acting DG to note the report and the plans that are going to be implemented in support of the work taking place in KZN.

Every child is a National Asset

Thank you!

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