
NEWS RELEASE

THURSDAY, 30 JUNE 2022

SOUTH AFRICAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION (SALGA) LAUNCHES ASISHO NATIONAL CAMPAIGN TO EDUCATE MEMBERS OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY ABOUT THEIR CIVIC OBLIGATION IN STRENGTHENING LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The South African Local Government Association (SALGA) successfully launched a nationwide civic responsibility campaign, Asisho! Let's Say It! in Mamelodi, City of Tshwane, as well as in Seshego in Polokwane on Wednesday, 29 June 2022.

Asisho! Let's Say It! aims to educate members of local communities about their duties and obligations towards the social and economic upliftment of their local areas by paying for municipal services rendered.

Other provinces are expected to follow with their respective launches, which will take place at selected venues across the nine provinces, where the campaign will be revealed at outdoor sites.

The launch in Pretoria was attended by, among others, the President of SALGA Cllr Bheke Stofile, Deputy Minister of Cooperative Governance Thembi Nkadimeng, members of the SALGA Provincial Executive Committee (PEC), Local Councillors, South African National Civic Organisation (SANCO) representatives, community members and leaders from local, provincial, and national government.

The Limpopo launch of the campaign was led by SALGA Provincial Chairperson, Cllr John Mpe and supported by Polokwane Member Mayoral Committee representative, Tshepo Nkwe, the Municipal Chief Financial Officer, Mr Naazim Essa and the Department of Treasury's Director for Municipal Finance, Ms Patience Ntuli.

Revealing the Mural Wall, Chairperson John Mpe said he will personally act as an Asisho campaign champion in his sphere of influence. Mpe said he sees Asisho as a rapid response tool, which will assist not only Polokwane Municipality but other municipalities to meet their budget expectations. John Mpe says of the R13.6 billion debt owed to the municipality, R7 billion is owned by state organs and R3 billion by residents.



The Asisho! Let's Say It campaign gives impetus to the organisation's vision for the 5th Term of Democratic Local Government, which focuses on advancing a People-Centred Democratic Local Government. The campaign flows from the organisation's 2022 National Conference and 2022-2027 strategic plan to strengthen the role of local government in championing the social, economic, and material needs of their communities.

Speaking during the panel discussion at the launch, President of SALGA, Cllr Bheke Stofile said to the audience: "What we need to understand was that Local government is a three-legged pot and comprises of the Council, the Administration and the Community. Over the last years, local government has not done much to mobilize the third leg – which is the community".

Cllr Bheke Stofile said one of the challenges facing local government was the growing gap between local government and the communities it serves.

"This can be seen in violent protests where residents destroy community assets and property. Asisho! Let's Say It is meant to close that gap," he said.

CoGTA Deputy Minister Thembi Nkadimeng emphasized the importance of strengthening local government and community collaboration on matters that promote the wellbeing of local areas. She spoke of how it was important for local communities to have a sense of ownership and civic responsibility, and paying for municipal services was one of the ways where citizens can participate in local governance beyond the ballot box.

Local Ward Councillor Mmina-Tau Marishane shared his experiences about community challenges in Mamelodi, including water challenges and municipal underspending, and he called on SALGA to help close the gap between the City of Tshwane and its communities.

The SALGA National Executive Committee (NEC) will provide further details on the campaign and encourage active participation from citizens and members of local communities across the length and breadth of the country.

"Asisho! Let's Say It..," will open-up the conversation:

- For Citizens, encourage active citizenry in their role in paying for services to enable effective delivery by local government.
- For Local government, promote a capable and agile local government with citizens at the center of service delivery.

END

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