



TAP & LEAK REPAIR

Koue Bokkeveld

Op-die Berg, in the Koue Bokkeveld, is a small town of about 170 families. Approximately 140 of these families live in subsidised RDP houses built approximately 10 years ago. “Most of the households consist of elderly or unemployed people,” says Isak

lived on commercial farms, but they are now cast aside. Their only source of income is either a social security grant or seasonal work on the fruit farms.”

“The quality of housing is very poor,” explains Isaks. “We live in a very cold place with temperatures reaching below freezing every night in winter. Most houses have no ceilings and thin, unplastered walls. The extreme winter temperatures burst many water pipes and damage taps. People can’t afford to fix them and as a result a lot of water is wasted. Worse still is that the Witzenberg Municipality charges for this water and many families can not afford to pay for water over and above their free 6000 litres per month.”

Project objectives:

- Train six local unemployed people in plumbing.
- Visit 140 houses in Op-die-Berg to identify and repair leaks.
- Visit 15 local schools and facilitate water audits, identify and repair any leaks.
- Create water awareness.

Long term goals:

- Create a sustainable plumbing business.
- Empower people to save money by repairing leaks.
- Conserve water and protect groundwater resources.

Contact:

Isak Isaks and Johannes Geduld
 PO Box 223
 Koue Bokkeveld
 6836
 Tel: 073 355 5570 or
 078 187 7525
 Fax: 023 317 0625



Isaks, a member of the Koue Bokkeveld Community Health Forum. “Most of the people living here once worked and

A very successful project to repair leaks was completed a few years ago by Johnny Cupido, a Water Mentor trained





Water and Small-Scale Infrastructure



through the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry's first IWRM programme. Cupido and his team of "emerging plumbers" repaired not only leaking pipes but fixed or replaced taps and toilet cisterns for free. Isaks plans to continue the initiative started by Cupido, with a small team of unemployed youth visiting each household to not only repair any leaks, but also create awareness of the importance of using water wisely. "Op-die-Berg uses groundwater, which is expensive as it has to be pumped. People can't see groundwater and do not understand the way it works. It is like a bank account," Isaks says: "withdraw too much and you may find yourself bankrupt!"

The Witzenberg Municipality is busy with another RDP housing project that will add 250 houses to the town of Op-die-Berg. Isaks explains: "This may double the town's water use. We need to conserve water by repairing all leaks and creating awareness. We plan to visit 15 local schools throughout the Koue Bokkeveld, bringing the message of water to our children, as they are the future custodians of our water resources."

