MEDIA RELEASE	**PSA laments failures by Limpopo Municipalities to use their allocated budgets**
DATE	10 July 2023
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The Public Servants Association (PSA) is shocked by reports that all, but three Limpopo Municipalities, returned their Municipal Infrastructure Grant allocations to National Treasury. The chief culprits are Sekhukhune District Municipality, Lephalale Local Municipality, and Thabazimbi Local Municipality that collectively returned R332 million, as they could only use R231 million of the allocated R552 million. These monies are returned whilst there is poor infrastructure maintenance and development in the province, where people are sharing contaminated river water with animals and many roads remain untarred, with tarred roads that have terrible potholes. The province is experiencing a number of community protests regarding poor service delivery, yet these municipalities fail to spend their allocated budgets.

It is a disturbing picture that only 3 municipalities managed to fully spend their allocated infrastructure budget which should make the Premier and the MEC of the Department of Co-operative Governance, Human Settlements and Traditional Affairs (CoGHSTA) have sleepless nights. It must be noted that the Limpopo is known for its failure to provide basic services while they hide under inadequate budget allocation despite failures to use the allocated budget. Municipalities should have used the allocated funds on developing new water sources, borehole development in water-stricken areas, upgrading of water storage facilities, the extension of water distribution networks, including the connection of metered yard connections so that the promised 6KL of free water per household can adequately be dispensed to poor households. Furthermore, municipalities could have repaired neglected roads in the province. The money should have been utilised to develop sanitation systems to dispense with pit latrines, which would have gone a long way in preventing contamination of underground water sources thus contributing to the eradication of water borne diseases like Cholera and Malaria.

The PSA is concerned about the impact of this incompetence as it would mean that the budget of these municipalities will be reduced going forward thus robbing the people of Limpopo their deserved allocations. The utilisation of these funds could have also resulted in temporary employment and skills development for young people in the province that would have been part of the team dealing with infrastructure development and maintenance. The inability of these municipalities to effectively implement efficient financial management systems may be attributed to a number of factors but one cannot rule out incompetence, a lack of consequence management, and cadre deployment. The PSA calls on the MEC of CoGHSTA to take action against those who failed to execute their mandate to provide basic services to communities to prevent the recurrence of this situation.

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