

BOTSHABELO UNEMPLOYED MOVEMENT INPUTS TO NERSA

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Dated: 23/01/2019

INTRODUCTION

My inputs here are not academic nor professional but informed by community lived experiences and our participatory action ~~research~~ program that Botshabelo Unemployed Movement is doing at the ground level.

BUM is a community based organization/social movement committed to address the massive issues of the unemployed such as the democratic control of the movement, social justices at a non-sectarian approach. BUM aims to serve both the rural and peri-urban poor communities of our region. Our aims and objectives are clearly stated in our constitution. BUM is a membership based organization, located in Botshabelo which is about 52 km away from Bloemfontein, in a former Apartheid Homeland of ~~KaNgwako~~ ^{Qutha-Qutha} ~~Ngwako~~, and the venue for these NERSA Public hearings is a clear reflection of that apartheid arrangement.

Unemployment is a man-made crisis, it is a crisis caused by over-accumulation, profit maximization and ecological destructive system of capitalism, where people with least access to resources are excluded and live in the periphery, we need a society that is build on the needs of the people not on profit.

BUM is affiliated to the National Assembly of the Unemployed, Inyanda National Movement of the rural poor, land access and agro-ecology struggles. BUM is also a member of the One Million Climate Jobs Campaign, which advocates for the universal provision of cheap electricity. We also strive to see a Public utility sector such as ESKOM to enhance a cleaner energy, which reduces carbon emissions.

We are concerned that this public hearing has been called into this hotel where poor marginalized communities are excluded. BUM as an organization thought

that service delivery is not implemented in Hotels but at the community level, because hotels are in business of promoting tourism and other services where most of the unemployed poor working class could not afford to come to these presentations/ public hearings convened by Nersa. In future, we would like NERSA to consider Energy/ Electricity regulation as another important aspect of service delivery that gets taken to the people not to Hotels where only business can afford to come and make presentations.

The stats SA show that at the last quarter of 2018, Unemployment stands at 29% which according to us is not even a true reflection of the unemployment level in this country. The reality is that unemployment stats are plus- minus 41% of South Africa's population, with the youth and women being mostly affected. Just imagine 9,8 million people not working, imagine the poverty and inequality in this country. Why should we allow capitalists to push us to the dustbins because of greed and corruption?

Has Eskom considered affordability and accessibility of the poor working class, the conditions that we are living under? Has ESKOM considered why we are in this situation because your management cannot manage this Public entity properly because of the continued media reports we receive on corruption at State/ Public Enterprise, so why should the poor bear the brunt of ESKOMs alleged corruption?

If you increase the tariffs the units go down, especially for most of us who buy electricity at the Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality why is it like that? We do understand that we live in an unequal society but as the poor we cannot allow ourselves to be pushed to most difficult situation by the greed administration, so stop treating ESKOM like a Private entity when it is Public utility and you have the ability to do that. *as Nersa*

As the poor communities we declare that the proposed electricity tariff is unreasonably high, and has direct impact on us as residents therefore we request that Eskom should re-look at the Multiyear- Price Determination which sets to regulate electricity price over the next three years to be considerate of our socio-economic conditions as the unemployed people or request ESKOM not to increase electricity tariffs and provide energy efficient solutions for us. The idea

Eskom must decrease tariff rather than increasing them.

that municipalities must generate revenue through basic service delivery issues such as electricity and water services should be scrapped, communities must buy electricity directly Eskom not municipalities or Treasury must improve funding allocation to local government to lessen the burden on the poor.

As cash strapped consumers we make an urgent plea to NERSA to end Energy poverty, inequality and unemployment and scrap Eskom s request for the tariff increase. Does Eskom have new plans to improve the situation on investing in new ways of generating electricity? Why can't Eskom champion SA towards a low-carbon, wage-led and sustainable path? ✓

What is the responsibility of the government in extracting minerals from our land? Is it to make some of you and your families rich at the expense of the poor? Why as government are you sending good quality coal outside the country and use third grade for SA?

We request that ESKOM produces electricity in a climate- friendly way ^{including} ~~too much coal dependency if we continue to hear about reports of coal shortages for our economic benefit.~~ We request massive rollout of energy efficient projects such as Renewable Energy to be part of ESKOM's electricity plan as stated in the draft IRP 2018 Policy Review and provision to township and rural dwellers who cannot afford high electricity prices.

In conclusion, Today's BUM presentation is a sign of resistance to the current ESKOMs tariff request and the impact of that on service delivery in poor communities, you cannot further push the poor to inequality, poverty and unemployment and expect being treated by golden gloves, because of alleged corruption happening at the Public Utility, tax the rich for the benefit of the poor. We stand against this economic catastrophe caused by Eskom.

Most of Eskom elites have gone, and that is a concern.
End, thank you for giving me the opportunity to make this submission.