

**SPEECH BY THE MINISTER OF WATER AND SANITATION, MRS NP  
MOKONYANE, AT THE OCCASION OF THE CONFERRING OF THE  
2014 WOMEN IN WATER AWARDS,**

**OLYMPIA SPORTS PARK STADIUM, RUSTENBURG**

**22 AUGUST 2014**

*Programme Director*

*Deputy Minister of Water and Sanitation, Ms. Tshwete*

*The Premier of the North West Province, Mr. Supra Mahumapelo*

*Members of the Portfolio Committee present*

*Members of the Provincial Legislature present*

*District and Local Mayors*

*Councillors*

*Traditional leaders*

*Church and spiritual leaders*

*The very important guests today, the finalists*

*Members of the community*

*Ladies and gentlemen*

*We are gathered here at this momentous occasion, to honour the women who continue to amaze all of us with their innovations and tenacity. We have gathered here to appreciate our mothers and sisters who have taken it upon themselves to not be overwhelmed by circumstances but to rather see opportunity at every turn of the road.*

*I am singularly honoured that in this twelfth year of the life of these Women in Water Awards, aptly held in the month that speaks of the adoration we should all have of women, in the twentieth year of our democracy, the sixtieth year of the Women's Charter, commemorating fifty-eight years of that great march of our women leadership against an atrocious form of oppression, the "dompas", we continue to honour our womenfolk.*

*It is true that women are at the coalface of the challenges around access to water. They walk long distances sometimes, just to make sure that there is water for cleaning, washing, cooking and drinking in their homes.*

*It is therefore true that women, in that instance and position, would need to find ways and means that would not just lead to immediate relief but impact on survival itself. The women that we are honouring today decided to find better ways of creating awareness and educating their communities on water conservation. This is truly the spirit of our great South African nation.*

*We are here today to acknowledge and reward the efforts by these wonderful women.*

*These awards I dare say cannot and must not be just about today. The lessons learnt must impact upon us all such that they become a way of life. The awareness campaigns need to be kept alive and water management become part of our everyday life.*

**No drop must be wasted.**

*We know that to teach a woman is to teach a nation. I therefore want to believe that all of us gathered here will continue to share the lessons learnt. These should be shared where we live and work, nurtured and passed on to future generations, so that conservation of water becomes a way of life.*

*Deputy Minister, Premier and guests, it is interesting to find such a spread of projects represented. We are heartened that we have such passionate and selfless women within the water family and not just scientists as partners.*

*We are enjoined as sector leaders to encourage all people to understand the centrality of water in our lives and that it is our collective responsibility to conserve this scarce resource.*

*Today cannot end when we leave this ceremony, we must encourage everyone to continuously find innovative ways of harvesting, conserving and managing water as a source of life.*

*Water is life: respect it, conserve it and enjoy it*

*Dankie Nginyabonga*