

# Women's Day: Access to water is critical

WATER is life and without water we cannot survive. Access to water then becomes critical for our survival.

As not all South Africans have access to piped water in their households, it becomes the burden of women to collect water for their households.

As we celebrate Women's Day on August 9 and Women's Month throughout the month of August, it is important that we focus on women empowerment and development.

This year, Women's Month is celebrated under the theme "Celebrating 30 years of Democracy towards Women's Development", and this requires us as a country to take stock of what has been done and what still needs to be done to empower women so as to contribute to their development and prosperity.

Government is doing its best to bring water closer to communities and this is helping to empower and develop women in the country.

As much as government is doing its part, it is the responsibility of all to work together to ensure women empowerment and development.

We must stand up as communities against water infrastructure vandalism.

The violation of the right to access to water negatively affects women development and their safety. Women's development also depends on access to dignified sanitation and hygiene.

Access to safe toilets and sanitary towels helps to build women's confidence, especially girls to be able to stand on equal footing with their male counterparts at school.

It's not all about flushing, so it is important that everyone has access to a safe toilet that ensures human dignity.

Proper toilets also ensure women's safety thereby contributing to their development.

The government is building proper toilets and has committed to eradicating bucket toilets to ensure have access to dignified sanitation, so let us not disrupt such projects.

Let us also protect them from vandalism. Let us also support the drives to donate sanitary towels so that no girl will lose important school days.

Let us all contribute to women's development by protecting water and sanitation infrastructure.

Let us also not allow water and sanitation infrastructure developmental projects to be derailed and stalled by hooligans who do not have the interests of the community at heart.

There will be no women's development without access to water and proper sanitation as water is life and sanitation is dignity, so let us be responsible citizens and work with the government to ensure that our communities have access to water and dignified sanitation and thereby contribute to women's empowerment, development and prosperity.

Let us embrace development and fight vandalism for the development of women.

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