



## INTERNET ARTICLE

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### Female engineer breaks barriers in the construction industry

South Africa annually commemorates Women's Month in the month of August. This year, Woman's Month is commemorated under the theme "**Generation Equality: Realizing Women's Rights for an Equal Future,**" and aims to raise awareness on the efforts to achieve global gender equality by 2030.

Thea Gouws is one woman who is walking the talk of breaking gender stereotypes and raising the bar for women in the construction industry.

Gouws has a National Diploma in Civil Engineering and is working alongside a team of outstanding engineers at the Department of Water and Sanitation's Construction South where they are constructing the Clanwilliam Dam Wall Raising project.

She is responsible for a variety of tasks ranging from laboratory testing on materials, to in-house designs and drawings and support work.

"My job is not without challenges, one being that I always have to work extra hard and make my voice be heard and taken seriously. Over the years, I have learnt to be confident in my decision making and always stood my ground," she said.

Gouws enjoys working both in the office and on-site.

"One aspect of my career I enjoy the most is being part of a project and seeing it come to fruition where it benefits people who need it the most," she added.

Giving advice to girls who have an interest in the construction industry, Gouw said: "Not a day goes by without you being able to learn something new, only if you are open to it. It does not matter if you are learning it from a male figure. Always do your best and strive to be the best version of yourself," she said.

The raising of Clanwilliam Dam wall in the Western Cape is one of the 10 mega projects identified by the Department that is aimed to enhance water security and the revival of SA's economy.

The project is set to benefit three municipalities, namely the West Coast District Municipality, Cederberg and Matsikama Local Municipalities in terms of additional income due to additional irrigation activities, economic development and also enhance the tourism potential of these municipalities.





## water & sanitation

Department:  
Water and Sanitation  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



The purpose of raising the Clanwilliam Dam wall is to improve the safety of the structure to comply with best practice dam safety standards coupled with the increase in annual supply of the dam by 69.5 million cubic metres of which a portion will be dedicated to assist in the development of disadvantaged farmers.

**Lebogang Maseko**



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